

# Circular Time, by Paul Cornell and Mike Maddox

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## [Spring]

(The Tardis materialises, door opens.)

NYSSA: Doctor, come and look. It's all so green.

DOCTOR: Most rain forests are, Nyssa.

NYSSA: It's beautiful, although I have to say, I've seen fishing boats that are smaller than some of those leaves. There's a thought. Do you think we could sail them on the lake?

DOCTOR: We're not here for fun. (door closes) Besides, these are only shrubs. You should see the size the trees can get to. Here, I think it best if you put this on.

NYSSA: Doctor, you're not suggesting we go swinging through the trees or anything silly, are you?

DOCTOR: Why, are you scared of heights?

NYSSA: I thought you would be, after falling off that telescope on Earth.

DOCTOR: Yes, well, if I'd had a rope and harness like this back then, I'd still be handing out the jelly babies in a mile-long scarf.

NYSSA: And you'd probably have tripped over it and plummeted to your death anyway. Can you actually die?

DOCTOR: Yes. And that's another reason why we're going to use these. I borrowed this rucksack from Mallory and Irvine just before their final attempt on Everest. George, I said, you lose your gloves on the mountain, you lose your life. Never saw him again.

NYSSA: So is that why these gloves say G Mallory inside?

DOCTOR: Er, probably a spare pair. Now then, carabiners, crampons, ice pick?

NYSSA: No thank you.

DOCTOR: There. Safe as houses. You know, the Time Lord's files describe this planet as a dreadful place. Shows how much they know, doesn't it?

NYSSA: If the Time Lords disapprove of your lifestyle, why do they ask you to make these trips for them?

DOCTOR: Well, they're clever, Nyssa. They occasionally ask me to go to places they know I'd give anything to see, knowing that if I didn't they'd only send some bureaucrat who wouldn't appreciate it properly.

NYSSA: So who is it this time, then? Alien invaders or a mad scientist?

DOCTOR: A fellow Time Lord, strangely enough. Cardinal Zero. Well on his way to getting a seat on the High Council and who's suddenly decided he's had enough and wants to go and live in the trees.

NYSSA: And you're supposed to talk him down.

DOCTOR: Something like that. Make sure he doesn't damage the time stream, persuade him to go home and be a good boy.

NYSSA: Can't say I blame him for wanting to stay. It's so peaceful here.

(Cries of distress.)

DOCTOR: Ah, that's more like it. Let's go and see what all the noise is about, shall we?

NYSSA: Up there? You're sure about this?

DOCTOR: Perfectly. The Tardis will be safe enough where it is. Come on.

REDKLAW: I warn you one last time, Hoodeye. Return that witch is mine.

HOODEYE: The food is mine, Redklaw, unless you think yourself up to taking it from me. I have cut you three times now. Do not be more of a fool than you already are.

REDKLAW: You call these cuts? Look at you. I damn near broke your arm. Now leave the food and go before I do something I'll regret.

HOODEYE: You will suffer for that.

REDKLAW: Not quick enough, Hoodeye.

NYSSA: Why are those people fighting? No, not people.

DOCTOR: Perhaps not human, but they are people.

NYSSA: Beaks, claws. Doctor, have they evolved from birds?

DOCTOR: Well, I think their dwellings have evolved from nests. Interesting. Help me with this harness. Let's see if we can't get a little closer.

: Enough! Guards, restrain these fools.

REDKLAW: Carrion, Elders, forgive me, my lady. We did not know. That is to say, I did not know that

HOODEYE: You fool. Redklaw, look what you've done.

CARRION: Silence. Hoodeye, Redklaw, you are found guilty of violence each against the other. Despite repeated warnings, you have continued this feud and are now judged according to the songs of the avian

people. Yeoman, bring the younger siblings.

YEOMAN: My lady. Hoodeye, Redklaw, it has been a long time since I have been forced to injure innocents as young as these. I shall not forget this, nor will you.

REDKLAW: My lady, please, take me instead. My place for both of them, I beg you.

HOODEYE: Double the injuries, treble them on me, but please spare the children.

CARRION: Do you think I take pleasure in this? By your actions you degrade us all. If you have no stomach for violence, then you should not have started the fight.

NYSSA: What are they doing?

DOCTOR: I don't know. It looks like a trial. The darker creature's obviously some kind of tribal chief, but I can't see why they'd have brought the chicks all the way up with them. Oh no.

CARRION: Kin of Hoodeye, three talon cuts. I am sorry. Kin of Redklaw, one injured arm. I am sorry.

NYSSA: Stop this! Stop this at once!

DOCTOR: Nyssa, what are you doing?

CARRION: Be calm. We have a visitor. Please, friend, come out and approach the flock. You have nothing to fear from us.

NYSSA: You've cut him. Look, he's bleeding.

CARRION: All are responsible for the actions of the nest. The most dearly beloved of a wrong-doer is punished in his place, and so he is shamed.

NYSSA: But this is horrible. Those are children!

DOCTOR: Please, Nyssa, let me handle this.

CARRION: Another visitor. Is he your mate?

NYSSA: Not in that sense.

DOCTOR: I'm sure my friend here didn't mean to interfere.

NYSSA: (sotto) She did. You'd have got round to doing the same.

DOCTOR: (sotto) Possibly, but

NYSSA: (sotto) But what?

DOCTOR: (sotto) But it would have been me doing it.

CARRION: I am advanced in years, and my hearing is not what it was.

DOCTOR: My apologies. My companion's concern was only for the children.

CARRION: Our justice has served us from the hatching of the world. Nest after nest live in peace. These two fools cannot bear to look the children in the eye. Do you think they will fall into violence again so soon?

CHICK: It was not Lady Carrion's fault. It was our brothers fighting.

CARRION: See? Even the children understand.

NYSSA: But in a civilised society

CARRION: And you would know of that, would you? Given the chaos, the destruction, in the wake of your companion's wings? Do you think yourself so superior, girl, given the company you keep?

NYSSA: What is she talking about?

DOCTOR: I think she means me.

CARRION: Welcome, Doctor. We have been expecting you for some time.

YEOMAN: Make way for the Lord Sarjah. Parliament reconvenes in one day. One day until the murderer is judged. Make way for the Sergeant.

SNOWFIRE: Hoodeye, where have you been? Is it true what they're saying, that you were caught fighting?

HOODEYE: Leave me alone, Snowfire.

SNOWFIRE: Please, tell me the news is false.

HOODEYE: I have shamed us all.

SNOWFIRE: But how could you? What was so important that you would risk the chicks?

HOODEYE: It was Redklaw. He was stealing food again.

SNOWFIRE: Then you should have let him. I needed you here to help with Father.

HOODEYE: I'm sorry. I should have been here to hide him. Snowfire, what's wrong?

SNOWFIRE: Are all the men in our family insane? Father has been arrested and will face trial tomorrow.

HOODEYE: Oh! What will we do?

SNOWFIRE: You know full well what will happen.

HOODEYE: I will go to the Sarjah. I'll prove that I was his favourite and take the consequences.

SNOWFIRE: When he heard the news of your arrest, Father publically disowned you.

HOODEYE: I don't know what to say, what to do.

SNOWFIRE: You have done enough. More than enough.

HOODEYE: Snowfire, wait. Come back.

YEOMAN: Make way! Make way for Lady Carrion! Make way for honoured guests, strangers from another world.

NYSSA: Doctor, look at the view.

DOCTOR: Remarkable. The whole town seems to just hang in the air. Can't see how the trees hold it up.

Lady Carrion, how long has it been since your people lost the power of flight?

CARRION: We no longer remember, Doctor. But life in the trees suits us well.

NYSSA: Some of these walkways must be two hundred feet high. However did you build them?

DOCTOR: (sotto) Very carefully, Nyssa. If a builder caused death through negligence they'd probably throw his family down after his victims.

NYSSA: You may not come from a civilised society, but you should be able to see this is wrong.

DOCTOR: Don't talk to our hosts like that.

NYSSA: I was talking to you.

DOCTOR: Oh. Very clever. And possibly very true, but hush.

CARRION: Below us, you will see the meeting place, the Parliament of Birds.

NYSSA: And this is the home of your ruler? The Sarjah, you called him.

CARRION: You expected his nest to be more like your own home? More like your Tardis?

DOCTOR: I'm surprised you allow yourselves to be ruled by an alien.

CARRION: He has proved himself on our terms. He has followed our laws to the letter, earned his position through hard work and trust. There was no Time Lord trickery.

NYSSA: Apart from his Tardis, of course.

CARRION: Which lies at the bottom of the great lake you see in front of us. At his command, his Tardis was floated out on a bed of moss and sunk to the bottom. It will be even harder to bring here than yours was, Doctor.

DOCTOR: You have my Tardis?

CARRION: A flock of engineers are bringing it here as we speak. They will set it down on the forest floor beneath us.

NYSSA: They must know a short cut.

CARRION: The Sarjah wished you to know the beauty of the city for yourself.

DOCTOR: Then thank you. It has been a most enlightening journey. Nyssa?

NYSSA: A most enlightening journey, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Carrion, I'm still intrigued by how you know I was coming.

CARRION: The Sarjah tells us he comes from a world where they may be gods, and yet they are not gods, merely old men with big collars, arguing.

DOCTOR: How perceptive he is.

CARRION: He also told us that sooner or later his own people would come looking for him, and that when they did, they would send you, Doctor.

NYSSA: Perceptive indeed.

CARRION: I shall inform the Sarjah that his guests have arrived.

DOCTOR: You know, it looks and feels a bit like Traken.

NYSSA: Except that its laws are random and brutal.

DOCTOR: And not at all like turning people into statues.

NYSSA: I shall sulk.

DOCTOR: Please don't.

NYSSA: Perhaps Cardinal Zero hopes to soften them, or make this place more like your planet.

DOCTOR: I do hope not.

NYSSA: I thought you would be happy to have another Time Lord leave, to see the universe for himself.

DOCTOR: I'm positively evangelical about the idea, but Zero's a Prydonian Cardinal, one of the Council of the Great Mother specialising in the politics of regeneration, if memory serves.

NYSSA: Regeneration has politics?

DOCTOR: Class politics, gender politics, species politics.

NYSSA: Species?

DOCTOR: Another time. If he were from any other Chapter I wouldn't worry. An Arcalian Cardinal would say in his Tardis, Patrexes would start cataloguing droppings, but Prydonians are cunning. Can't take your eyes off them for a second.

NYSSA: I thought you were a Prydonian.

DOCTOR: Nobody's perfect, Nyssa.

CARRION: The Sarjah will see you now.

YEOMAN: You will lower your head and extend your arms in a wing formation like so when approaching the Sarjah.

DOCTOR: Is this really necessary? I just want a quick chat and then I'll be on my way again.

NYSSA: You are showing respect to the office, Doctor, not the person. It's cultural.

DOCTOR: Yes, yes, of course.

NYSSA: You look like an ostrich.

DOCTOR: I rather think that's the idea.

CARRION: The visitor is given leave to approach the throne.

ZERO: Doctor, what a pleasant surprise. And here I was expecting an assassin, some sneaky little interventionist. Instead I receive a call from the High Council's little friend.

DOCTOR: I don't think the High Council ever considered me a friend, Zero.

ZERO: Nonsense. Everyone knows they like to keep on good terms with their token rebel. Rebel President, even. Makes the illusion of a free society all the more complete. Here to stop me, are you?

DOCTOR: Temporal projectionists on Gallifrey predict this species will make the jump from steam to orbital space flight in less than three generations. Ten years ago this world was a series of feudal baronies.

ZERO: Indeed. The avians have taken to democratic governance like fledglings to the sky. And they'll have that back too, once they work out how to get the helium for the balloons.

NYSSA: You're going to give them back the power of flight?

ZERO: I'm going to let them do it themselves. They're a race of birds. Can you imagine what it'll mean to them? It's a longing their whole culture is based on. I'm sorry, I haven't had the pleasure.

NYSSA: I am Nyssa of Traken.

ZERO: Traken? My poor girl. My sympathies. I had no idea. Please, forgive me.

NYSSA: Thank you.

ZERO: Well, go on then, Doctor. Tell me my business.

DOCTOR: Why are you playing God with these people?

ZERO: The avians speak of a prophet who will lead them back to the skies. If I wanted to be their saviour, I'd get a pair of anti-grav boots from my Tardis and float around squawking 'this way, lads' with a plastic beak on my nose.

NYSSA: Except that your Tardis is under the great lake.

DOCTOR: His Tardis *is* the great lake, Nyssa. It's disguised.

NYSSA: But it's huge. How can you tell?

DOCTOR: Well, because it's a Tardis. I can spot them a mile off.

NYSSA: You didn't spot the Master's Tardis last time.

ZERO: He's bluffing. I mean, he's right, as it turns out, but he's still bluffing, aren't you.

DOCTOR: You tell me.

NYSSA: That's interesting. You've turned your back on your own people, but you still have one foot on the path out of the maze. Why keep your Tardis? Why not just send it back?

DOCTOR: Because he needs it to be understood. Even if our friend Zero took it upon himself to learn Avian, he could never hope to speak it without his Tardis to help him.

NYSSA: Of course. His throat's the wrong shape. He'd need a syrinx to make birdsong. His larynx could never create the tones.

ZERO: Avian languages are more than mere song. They rely on ritual display, on plumage, on dance.

DOCTOR: I was going to ask why you're wearing feathers.

ZERO: Politeness, if you must know. So, Nyssa, our expert on the syrinx, do you know where the word comes from in the legends of the Doctor's favourite planet?

NYSSA: No, but I'm sure you're going to tell me.

DOCTOR: Syrinx was a water nymph of great beauty. She was courted by Pan, a demi-god, half man half animal. Rather than welcome his embraces, she ran to the lake and turned herself into a bed of reeds.

ZERO: Yes, but randy old Pan cut down the reeds and fashioned himself a set of pipes with a delicate, wistful tone. Pan pipes.

DOCTOR: And ruined every hotel lobby from then onwards.

NYSSA: It's a sad story.

ZERO: It is. Of course the lake below us is very different to the ones in Greece, but still, I often think of her as I look down on it. She had lovely eyes, a tragic beauty, physically transformed through her rejection of the baser instincts.

NYSSA: Regenerated.

ZERO: If you like.

DOCTOR: That's not something you could afford to do here, though, is it? If you regenerated, then the avians wouldn't recognise you.

ZERO: Not all of us wish to use our lives up at the speed you fritter yours away, Doctor.

DOCTOR: I wouldn't say they were frittered. Besides, not all of them were by choice, or accident.

NYSSA: Sorry?

ZERO: Ah, of course. Your pre-exile regeneration, first part of your punishment.

NYSSA: Punishment? Exile?

DOCTOR: You see, Nyssa, I once had to change my appearance at the insistence of the High Council.

NYSSA: You were exiled? I thought you left Gallifrey freely.

DOCTOR: Yes, well, some things have got a bit, er, blurred in the telling over the years, and er

ZERO: Anyway, back to me. So, yes, Doctor, you're right. If I were to change, even if they grasped it intellectually, it would interfere with their visual language to the point where they could never recognise me. Come this way. There's something I want to show you. After you, Nyssa.

NYSSA: Thank you.

YEOMAN: Lady Carrion.

CARRION: What is it, Yeoman?

YEOMAN: The prisoner has been escorted across the lake. He'll be roosting in Platch by sunrise.

CARRION: Good. And the next of kin?

YEOMAN: Have been informed, and are under close observation. They will be escorted alongside the Sarjah when he makes his journey tomorrow.

CARRION: Good. We don't want anyone fleeing the coop this time, do we?

YEOMAN: No, my lady.

CARRION: Make sure that the tool of execution is kept safe. That is all.

YEOMAN: My lady.

ZERO: Welcome to the hatcheries.

DOCTOR: Good grief.

ZERO: The boughs of the trees hold the nests, the nests give shelter for the shoots, while the trees grow creepers to hold them safe.

NYSSA: Symbiosis.

ZERO: Oh, the symbiosis goes much deeper than that, Nyssa. See the plants that grow alongside them?

DOCTOR: You mean this yellow stuff?

ZERO: I wouldn't touch it if I were you, Doctor. It's called the Yolk of Darts. The droppings of the chicks combine with the fruit juices to make a reliable contact poison.

DOCTOR: Charming.

ZERO: It deters males, stops them smashing the eggs. An elegant system. The chicks are protected, the fruit grows uneaten.

NYSSA: And any males who are killed are used as compost. More symbiosis.

DOCTOR: So it's harmless to females and chicks.

ZERO: Perfectly. Pick it up, Nyssa. It's quite safe.

NYSSA: And to Time Lords?

ZERO: Ha. Another good question. What do you think, Doctor? Shall we find out?

DOCTOR: Oh please, after you.

ZERO: How kind. No, it will not kill us, Nyssa, in the same way a hail of bullets might not kill us.

NYSSA: But it would be traumatic enough to trigger a regeneration.

ZERO: Indeed. On the plus side, it's perfectly painless. A very gentle way to go. But I have no intention of using myself as a test subject. Not here, at least. Pick it up, Nyssa.

NYSSA: It's beautiful. (sniffs deeply) Doctor, it smells wonderful. May I keep it?

DOCTOR: Look, just stick it in the rucksack or something, will you?

ZERO: Now, over there in the distance, that is the great city of Platch. We'll head there first thing in the morning.

NYSSA: It looks very complicated, like so much else here.

ZERO: The path leads behind the waterfall that feeds the lake. You'll need waterproof clothes from your Tardis, or you'll be soaked to the skin. Another advantage of feathers.

DOCTOR: Yes, what about my Tardis?

ZERO: Lady Carrion tells me it will be with us before dawn. They'll leave it in the clearing below. It'll be quite safe.

NYSSA: Why are we going to the city?

ZERO: Business. There's been a murder, the first in six years. Can you imagine?

NYSSA: Yes. Will you act as judge?

ZERO: And jury.

NYSSA: And executioner?

ZERO: I will hear the accusation, hear the defendant speak, and make a decision on the spot. The person most beloved of the murderer will then meet the same fate as the victim.

DOCTOR: Which was?

ZERO: Oh, he was beaten to death with a lump of granite.

DOCTOR: And you will go through with it? Knowingly kill an innocent with your bare hands?

ZERO: Two birds, one stone. You'll find out tomorrow. Remember, this is their culture, not mine. I have not interfered in any way with what was already here. Do you think I should?

DOCTOR: Perhaps.

NYSSA: Yes.

ZERO: One minute I'm doing too much, the next it's too little. What have the Time Lords asked you to do here, Doctor? Stop the creation of the avian empire? Lock them in a tunnel and set them back over a thousand years?

DOCTOR: The High Council trusts me to follow my instincts.

ZERO: (laughs) I'm sure that's the only basis on which they could employ you. Come on, let me show you to your bowers. We've a long day ahead of us, and you'll need the rest.

DOCTOR: Thank you.

ZERO: I'll have some food sent up. Don't eat anything blue.

NYSSA: More poison?

ZERO: There's no exact equivalent in your culture, but the nearest would be... roadkill.

NYSSA: Urgh.

DOCTOR: It's a cultural thing, Nyssa. I wouldn't worry about it.

HOODEYE: Snowfire, come back. This isn't right.

SNOWFIRE: Wait for me, Hoodeye. I won't be long.

HOODEYE: Please, rethink what you're doing. These are strangers, aliens. Anything could happen.

SNOWFIRE: And when was the last time you thought about anything, Hoodeye? If you're scared, then run.

Don't let them catch you with me.

DOCTOR: Oh, go back to sleep, Doctor. Is that you, Nyssa? Having trouble sleeping too? I don't know about you, but my nest seems to be lined with holly. Nyssa?

SNOWFIRE: Forgive me, Time Lord.

DOCTOR: Hello. We haven't met.

SNOWFIRE: Please, keep your voice down. I should not be here. My name is Snowfire.

DOCTOR: I'm sure it is. Isn't it a bit late for someone so young to be up and about? Or do I mean early?

SNOWFIRE: It doesn't really matter if I am caught. After tomorrow, nothing will matter to me again.

DOCTOR: Right. Er

SNOWFIRE: My father, Willowsap, he fell into a dispute over the ownership of fruit trees near our nest. He's not been himself since my mother died, and he has fallen into black moods.

DOCTOR: And?

SNOWFIRE: He killed our neighbour, in full view of the whole flock. He hit him with a rock, and he died.

DOCTOR: I'm so sorry.

SNOWFIRE: Tomorrow the Sarjah will hear the case against my father and he will be found guilty. I don't want to die, Doctor. This method of justice is wrong. Many people say that now. We should not punish the innocent for the crimes of the guilty.

DOCTOR: So why has no one asked the Sarjah to change the laws?

SNOWFIRE: No one may do anything outside of the law. Not until we are all free.

DOCTOR: What do you mean, free?

SNOWFIRE: We are all slaves of the law until the curse of our biology is lifted, until we return to the skies.

DOCTOR: And the Sarjah is committed to non-interference. A true Time Lord to the last.

SNOWFIRE: I am scared. Will you help me?

DOCTOR: Do you want me to take you with me?

SNOWFIRE: No. If I run from the court they will assume my suicide. We punish such cowardice. My whole flock will suffer my fate.

DOCTOR: I see.

NYSSA [OC]: Who are you talking to, Doctor? Is there someone in your room, er, nest?

DOCTOR: No, no one. Just a bad dream, Nyssa. Go back to sleep. (sotto) Go home, Snowfire, and wait. I'll do what I can. I am not without influence.

SNOWFIRE: Thank you, Doctor.

DOCTOR: (sighs) How do I get myself into these things? Nyssa. Nyssa.

NYSSA [OC]: I thought you told me to go back to sleep.

DOCTOR: Yes. I need the rucksack from your nest.

NYSSA [OC]: (sighs) One moment.

NYSSA: There. Can I go back to sleep now?

DOCTOR: The sun's nearly up. Can't imagine what the dawn chorus must be like on this planet, but I doubt you'll sleep through it anyway.

NYSSA: Oh, that's strange. The plant's gone.

DOCTOR: Let's see. Swiss Army knife, Kendal Mint Cake. Ah, rope. Good. That's strange. Mallory's gloves have gone.

NYSSA: Do you ever listen? What are you doing, anyway?

DOCTOR: Running out of options.

NYSSA: Doctor, if I've pushed you into acting one way or the other...

DOCTOR: Outside, quickly.

NYSSA: Coast's clear.

DOCTOR: Good. Nyssa, I want you to get back to the Tardis. Take the rope, tie it off over the walkway and then put the harness on. Can't be more than a twenty foot drop.

NYSSA: And what will you be doing?

DOCTOR: As I was saying before, there are certain Gallifreyan protocols which dictate that before a period of exile, a Time Lord is first required to regenerate. Zero knows this as well as I do.

NYSSA: Are you going to kill him?

DOCTOR: What? No, of course not.

NYSSA: I was beginning to wonder.

(Snoring.)

DOCTOR: He's in here.

NYSSA: Still asleep, and unguarded.

DOCTOR: No one would ever dare hurt him. Look, I

NYSSA: Don't worry, I'm going.

DOCTOR: Zero, wake up. Zero. Oh, for goodness' sake. Look out! Vampires in the Capitol!

ZERO: Doctor, what's... ah.

DOCTOR: We need to talk.

ZERO: The Yolk of Darts. Who would place this in my bed?

DOCTOR: What are you going on about? And what are Nyssa's gloves doing in your room?

ZERO: I would imagine someone used them to carry the plant, Doctor. This plant here, in my nest.

DOCTOR: I really wouldn't touch that, Zero.

ZERO: Why not? In case I do this?

DOCTOR: Zero, no!

ZERO: He's killed me. He's killed me with the Yolk of Darts.

DOCTOR: You set me up.

ZERO: There's no pain. It feels like... like a bottle of decent retsina. Must be the pine resin. How strange.

NYSSA: Doctor, stop. I can't let you...

DOCTOR: I told you to go back to the Tardis.

CARRION: What is happening? Ah, the Sarjah.

(Shrieking and flailing.)

NYSSA: Watch out, the balcony.

CARRION: Stop him!

(Zero screams, splash.)

NYSSA: Doctor, we have to get him out of the lake.

DOCTOR: Not the lake, his Tardis.

CARRION: You've killed him!

DOCTOR: I do hope not.

CARRION: Guards, to me!

NYSSA: No! Listen.

(Very slow time rotors, splashing, flapping.)

ZERO: (bird effect) I live!

DOCTOR: Oh dear.

YEOMAN: Lady Carrion, look.

CARRION: The prophet! Surely it's the prophet!

NYSSA: Doctor, he's flying!

DOCTOR: The poison must have been more complicated than I thought. It's altered the Gallifreyan DNA.

NYSSA: He's regenerated into something half Time Lord

DOCTOR: Half avian, yes. Nice wings, Zero.

ZERO: Yes, magnificent, aren't they? Looks like I won't need the anti-grav boots after all, Doctor.

DOCTOR: You know, your acting's really come on since your days in Athens.

ZERO: I am sorry, I just love that guilty look on your face.

DOCTOR: You were laying it on a bit thick.

NYSSA: I'm not sure I'm following this. You mean...

DOCTOR: He knew exactly how I was going to act if I was pushed in a certain direction. He even told me it would be painless.

CARRION: The Sarjah. Where is the Sarjah?

ZERO: Yes, that's going to take some explaining, isn't it. Let's keep it simple. How about... I killed him.

CARRION: What?

DOCTOR: What?

ZERO: Yes, I freely admit it. Drowned him in the lake.

CARRION: But, Prophet, you have no kin, no flock. Who can we punish?

ZERO: It is going to be a problem, isn't it, that I have no family here. But you could always ask the nearest thing I have, my dear cousin the Doctor.

DOCTOR: Nyssa.

NYSSA: Run?

DOCTOR: Excellent suggestion.

CARRION: Stop them!

DOCTOR: Don't look back, Nyssa. Accurate, aren't they?

NYSSA: Here, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Now this bit clips in here, and this bit clamps on here.

NYSSA: It's rare to see you so completely fooled.

DOCTOR: Who says I was fooled?

NYSSA: If I was a more suspicious person, I'd wonder if you weren't a good actor too.

DOCTOR: Look up, pull in the slack and yank hard on the rope to slow your speed. Now go!

CARRION: Guards, guards! Kill him!

DOCTOR: Sorry, must fly.

CARRION: No! Guards, ready more arrows. Fire at will. Again!

ZERO: Oh, close, my lady Carrion, but not close enough.

CARRION: Prophet, they will escape us.

ZERO: I know, I know. Dreadful shame, isn't it. And how appalling that I, the great leader so long predicted, should have to live with the burden of my crimes going unpunished. And so long as the Doctor never shows his face around these parts again. (The Tardis dematerialises) Yes, yes, they will go unpunished.

CARRION: Prophet?

ZERO: I killed the Sarjah, but you can't kill me or else we'll never get you up and flying again, will we? So we'll need a total review of the entire judicial system. From henceforth we shall punish wrongdoers, not their family. An immediate amnesty for all, with instant effect, obviously, to let me off the hook.

CARRION: Yes, Prophet.

ZERO: Well, we haven't got all day. Early bird gets the worm.

CARRION: Prophet?

ZERO: Never mind. Tell me, Carrion. How do you feel about steam engines, hmm?

### [Summer]

GUARD: Halt. Friend or foe?

MOLLY: The King of Spain wearing a dress.

GUARD: (laughs) Forgive me, Mistress Richards. I didn't see you there.

MOLLY: Forgiven. Is my husband around?

GUARD: He's taking on some new prisoners. Special treatment, they're getting.

MOLLY: I didn't know we had a boat through the Traitor's Gate tonight.

GUARD: They came up the main gate under special guard.

MOLLY: Well, I'd better take him his supper, then, before he gets too caught up in his work.

GUARD: Gawd bless yer. Working the rack on an empty stomach is torture itself.

MOLLY: So he tells me.

GUARD: Mistress.

JAILER: Molly! Bless you, love, I'm starving. What you got for me?

MOLLY: A bit of ham and a junket. Wouldn't be right to have the Royal Jailer hungry on a cold night like this.

JAILER: It's July, my sweet. It's so hot I can hardly breathe.

MOLLY: But you're near the river. Awful damp. Sensitive soul as you shouldn't be here.

JAILER: Hey, talking of sensitive souls, got a right couple in today. Brought in by the Royal Mint, they were. Queer sorts. Not the type you'd expect to get picked up for

DOCTOR: Forgery. Of all the stupid things to be arrested for, Nyssa.

NYSSA: Doctor, will you stop going on about it. You spoke so highly of him.

DOCTOR: I still do. (chains rattle) Ow.

NYSSA: Here, your manacles are twisted.

DOCTOR: It's not his fault he's... ow... homicidal maniac. Awkward, spectacularly rude, but quite brilliant.

NYSSA: You still admire him?

DOCTOR: A man after my own hearts.

NYSSA: You mean you're a homicidal maniac too?

DOCTOR: I mean that he explored space from a comfy chair, saved the economy, invented the cat-flap, and still, still he found time to disguise himself, hang around in bars and fight crime.

NYSSA: I feel as if it's all my fault.

DOCTOR: Nonsense. If I hadn't been so occupied with the man at the next table then I wouldn't have given you coins from the wrong era, and we wouldn't have been arrested for something as stupid as forgery.

NYSSA: What was it that was so fascinating, anyway?

DOCTOR: Alchemy. Gobbledegook mainly, but there were interesting parallels with quantum light wave particle duality.



NYSSA: Oh well, I can see why it grabbed your attention.

DOCTOR: How could I have been so stupid not to realise that I was actually talking to

GUARD: Sir Isaac Newton, Director of the Royal Mint. Prisoners will stand.

JAILER: Ah, Molly, that junket was divine. Our kids are lucky to have a Ma who's such a great cook. Who's looking after them, by the way?

MOLLY: Emily.

JAILER: Huh?

MOLLY: 'S all right, she won't eat them. Not since little Sarah gave her a black eye and Nicholas set her wimple on fire.

(Both laugh.)

JAILER: We should let them both loose on old Sir Isaac. They'd sort him out.

MOLLY: They'd bring on one of his turns, is what. Never hear the end of it. (creaking) What was that noise?

JAILER: Pardon me. I'm so hungry my stomach's growling like a Spaniard with thumbscrews on his

GUARD: Manacles will be removed if you answer questions for the Director. You will stand.

NYSSA: We are standing.

NEWTON: Guard, your pistol.

GUARD: Sir Isaac.

NEWTON: You will talk.

(Gunshot, Nyssa screams.)

NEWTON: Reload the pistol.

GUARD: Sir.

NEWTON: The next time, I will shoot at the girl's head, not at the bed. Now talk.

DOCTOR: What is it that seems to be the matter?

NEWTON: I have examined the coins you were arrested with. They are no currency I am aware of. If they are intended as amusement...

DOCTOR: Yes, a joke, that's right.

NEWTON: Then you will hang for it anyway. Strike him.

DOCTOR: Ow!

NEWTON: Do not interrupt me again.

DOCTOR: I wish you wouldn't do that.

NEWTON: I do not like fools, forgers or Catholics. Which are you?

NYSSA: We are not forgers, and we're not Catholics, whatever they are.

NEWTON: So you are Anglicans at least.

NYSSA: Not that either.

DOCTOR: Nyssa, do please stop ruling things out.

NYSSA: Scientists do that, rather than locking people up and beating them.

NEWTON: Guard, outside.

GUARD: Sir.

(Door closes.)

NEWTON: This should be interesting.

JAILER: Bert, did I hear a shot?

GUARD: Sir Isaac shot at the bed.

JAILER: Oh, not again. Trying to scare them, is he?

GUARD: He ruddy well terrifies me.

JAILER: Me an' all. You go back and tell my Lucy to keep supper warm. I'll hang around a bit in case he brings on one of his funny turns.

GUARD: Right you are, sir.

JAILER: And no helping yourself!

NEWTON: Not helping yourself, are you? Neither Anglican nor Catholic. Well, you don't dress like Jews. I wonder what you are?

DOCTOR: We are travellers from far away.

NEWTON: Really. Orthodox, perhaps?

NYSSA: Not a word I'd use to describe him.

NEWTON: Be quiet. Before your arrest you declared yourself an alchemist through your words. You saw through my disguise, I take it. Who sent you? Was it one of Hooke's friends?

DOCTOR: Honestly, I had no idea who you were. It's been a long time since I saw you and I didn't recognise you dressed as an Algerian juggler with a false chin.

NEWTON: We've met before? I would have remembered.

NYSSA: He means he pointed you out to me, once. Isn't that right, Doctor?

DOCTOR: Yes, that's right. It was a long time ago.

NEWTON: Why, were you looking at me down the barrel of a musket?

NYSSA: No!

NEWTON: I have studied the coins. Forgers are normally drawn and quartered, but curiosity got the better of me. The antique was obvious enough, but whatever metal the rest are made from, they are like nothing I've seen before.

DOCTOR: Well, I travel around a fair bit, you know, pick up all sorts of interesting bric-a-brac.

NEWTON: They've been milled. Serrated coins cannot be clipped and pressed into new coins.

DOCTOR: Obvious, when you think about it.

NEWTON: And yet the Royal Mint waited until I came along to do it.

DOCTOR: Parliament was delighted.

NYSSA: Oh, naturally. And so they should be. (sotto) Is this the right thing to say?

NEWTON: Parliament bores me.

DOCTOR: (sotto) Apparently not. (normal) And yet you've been a member for years.

NEWTON: I spoke in Parliament once. I asked the Speaker to close the window. It was causing a draught.

NYSSA: How annoying.

NEWTON: You will yield the secrets of these coins or I will have the truth ripped from you with pliers. Until then you will be kept alive. (thumps on door) Guard! (door opens) I will be back with questions as they occur to me. I will have the jailer bring you food. I will tell him not to spit in it unless I expressly command it.

DOCTOR: How kind.

JAILER: Will that be all tonight, Sir Isaac?

NEWTON: As an alchemist he deserves a last meal. I saw your wife with food. It will save time if you take it up to them now.

JAILER: You're sure they wouldn't prefer something cold, sir?

NEWTON: You heard my command. The prisoners are valuable to me, and so check the food for poison.

JAILER: Very good, sir.

NEWTON: If they die, it will be for God, the King, and my amusement. Fail me and I'll drown your children like a sackful of kittens.

JAILER: Non-poisoned food it is, sir. At once.

NEWTON: If anyone interrupts me without good reason, I want their toenails torn out and fed to the ravens.

JAILER: Yes, sir. (sotto) Ravens don't like toenails. Toes, maybe.

DOCTOR: Let's see. There were seven coins in the bag. Did any of them have legs?

NYSSA: No.

DOCTOR: They're probably all from Earth, then. Could be a lot worse.

NYSSA: We're in a torture chamber. It would be interesting to know what your idea of 'a lot worse' is.

DOCTOR: You know, Dalek Task Force, Mars winning the Ashes again, the usual.

NYSSA: We can rule out secret passages?

DOCTOR: 'Fraid so.

NYSSA: Unexpected help from outside?

DOCTOR: No one knows we're here.

NYSSA: That's why it's called unexpected.

DOCTOR: Can't really bank on it.

NYSSA: New sonic screwdriver you've never mentioned before?

DOCTOR: Must get around to making one.

NYSSA: Then what?

DOCTOR: The truth?

NYSSA: The truth.

DOCTOR: The truth shall set you free. John chapter 8 verse 32. Don't forget, Isaac's a deeply religious man.

NYSSA: We tell him the truth and he sets us free. He's going to think we're these Catholics.

DOCTOR: I don't think so.

NYSSA: I take it Catholics are a political faction?

DOCTOR: Religious.

NYSSA: On Traken it was the same thing.

DOCTOR: It is in most places.

NYSSA: You said something about the truth.

DOCTOR: Plato is my friend, Aristotle is my friend, but my best friend is truth. Newton said that. More than anything he wants the truth.

NYSSA: Well, even if he's clever enough to work it out in his sleep, that still gives us eight hours to escape.

DOCTOR: Three. He wakes up at four every morning, worrying. It's one reason he's so irritable.

NYSSA: I thought not knowing the answer to something irritated him.

DOCTOR: Considering he created an entirely new form of mathematics just to solve the problems only he's

thought of, I'd say that was something of an understatement.

(Door opens.)

JAILER: I hope you're grateful.

NYSSA: Ah, food. (sniffs) At least I think it's food.

JAILER: Sir Isaac insisted I give you my supper. Anything less than gratitude will be responded to with extreme violence, which is apparently all I have to keep me going these days.

DOCTOR: Thank you.

JAILER: You know, you've got the air of someone who's used to being locked up. I hope you don't mind my asking. Professional curiosity and all.

DOCTOR: Does it show?

JAILER: No mistaking it. The whiff of the brazier, the rubber manacles. Most people would be struck dumb with terror by now. But you seem merely... disappointed somehow. Are you Catholics by any chance?

NYSSA: He's a Prydonian.

JAILER: Ah. Free thinkers.

DOCTOR: They're usually anything but.

(Bell rings.)

JAILER: Now what's that? I'd better go and see. Don't go away now.

(Laughs, door closes.)

DOCTOR: Marvellous. A comedian.

JAILER: Well, lad? What is it?

GUARD: It's Sir Isaac. He's changed his mind. He wants the prisoners out in the yard. He's getting himself all worked up, he is.

JAILER: But I've just fed them.

GUARD: He says at once.

JAILER: Right, just enough time to save my supper.

(Door opens.)

JAILER: Whoa! Put down the spoons if you value your lives.

NYSSA: Pardon?

JAILER: Forgot to test it for poison. If you die I'll be skinned alive.

DOCTOR: And we wouldn't want that.

JAILER: Prisoners will rise.

NYSSA: Why?

JAILER: Sir Isaac wants you outside. Bert, take 'em for me. I'm just going to make sure this food's properly tasted.

GUARD: But your wife made it.

JAILER: Can't be too careful.

GUARD: He said you were to come in person, sir.

JAILER: Right, I'll bring it with me. Lead on.

GUARD: There we go, Sir Isaac, sir. Prisoners accounted for.

DOCTOR: This is Tower Hill, Nyssa, where criminals are beheaded.

NYSSA: Doctor, do you think that they're going to...

DOCTOR: Execution is a spectator sport. If we're for the chop it'll be on Saturday in front of a crowd.

NEWTON: Guards, withdraw. This is not for your ears.

GUARD: Sir.

NEWTON: I've changed my mind about the metals. Whatever secrets they hold, they will speak to me in my crucible. No, I am more interested in... this.

(Claps hands, hoof sounds, cart rumbles.)

DOCTOR: Oh no.

NEWTON: It was found outside the inn where you were arrested. What is it?

DOCTOR: It's a sedan chair. Big, isn't it? And a lovely shade of royal blue. Let me show you how it opens. Nyssa?

GUARD: (distant) Stay where you are! Halt or I'll shoot.

NEWTON: It does not burn. I've tried. It does not scratch, does not cut. I think it is perhaps the most interesting object in the whole of London this night.

DOCTOR: And why would that be?

NEWTON: The coins you were arrested with. I was thinking of a way I might ascertain their properties when I saw something of far more interest.

DOCTOR: Which was?

NEWTON: This coin here. A map of Europe on one side, a harp on the other. The year two thousand and three pressed onto it. I dismissed it as Irish propaganda. It shows no King, which is laughable.

NYSSA: Because?

NEWTON: King William's victory at the Boyne ensures us Ireland will be subject forever.

DOCTOR: Forever is an awfully long time.

NEWTON: The hexagonal coin, the picture of a Queen, Elizabeth the Second, a Protestant name, surely, and it has a Tudor portcullis on the reverse. The year shown is 1953.

NYSSA: Which proves what?

NEWTON: And this. Two metals in one coin, denoting two pounds. The same Elizabeth and the same date as the Irish coin. 2003. Do you follow this?

DOCTOR: Oh yes, very carefully.

NYSSA: I'm glad someone is.

NEWTON: If the coin with a harp were Irish propaganda, then why this? Surely it would make more sense to show England ruled by Spain if the plan were to spread Catholic lies.

DOCTOR: I can assure you, you have this all wrong. These are trinkets for amusement only. There is nothing political in them.

NEWTON: Nothing political! What could be more political than money? Another lie and I shall have the guards take the girl away for... questioning.

DOCTOR: No, no, that won't be necessary

NEWTON: This silver one. 1978. It shows a man - not a King, a plain man.

NYSSA: How can you tell?

NEWTON: No laurel.

NYSSA: Laurel?

NEWTON: No crown. No name. The word Liberty on one side and United States of America on the other.

DOCTOR: Colonial propaganda, then.

NEWTON: It shows an eagle holding an olive branch, and yet, in the background, we see the Americas seen as on a globe. The eagle hovers above a craggy surface such as the Moon might appear if observed through my telescope.

NYSSA: (sotto) He has telescopes?

DOCTOR: (sotto) Another of his talents.

NEWTON: By 1978 a kingless America will conquer the Moon. By 2003 a kingless Ireland joins to our enemies in Europe.

DOCTOR: As you say, ridiculous.

NEWTON: And then the antique. It is genuine Roman. But if it is genuine, then what of the others? They are not newly minted, they are weathered with tiny abrasions, oil from fingertips. Old coins from the future that cannot exist, carried by an alchemist.

NYSSA: You know, sometimes not thinking is very relaxing.

NEWTON: This blue box. I have seen things and done things that other men would dare not imagine. I have flaunted taboos that would shock you. And yet, do I dare say what I think about you, Doctor?

DOCTOR: Try me.

NEWTON: I think... I think it is a time machine. You are time travellers.

DOCTOR: Really. Something that looks like a sedan chair, sat in a jail yard, able to travel in Time? That's ridiculous!

NEWTON: I'm right.

DOCTOR: Why don't you let me inside and I'll show you.

NYSSA: Doctor.

DOCTOR: Please, Nyssa.

NEWTON: And have you escape? Have you go back and smother me in my crib?

NYSSA: We are not killers.

NEWTON: Interfere with my past, then. As a young man I was sold a book on alchemy by an old man at a fair. It changed the direction of my life. Delay him by but one day and I would now be Rector of some dull church instead of an alchemist.

DOCTOR: You realise how far-fetched all this sounds?

NEWTON: The blue glass on the top of the box. What is it?

DOCTOR: A lamp. A blue lamp.

NEWTON: When first I split light through the prism, I hoped to filter green light. I thought it might contain the living Word of God like the emerald tablet of Giza. You are familiar with it?

DOCTOR: Yes, I know of the emerald tablet. But this is a blue box, not a jade pagoda.

NEWTON: By necessity, God is everywhere. He intervenes to ensure the universe stays to its appointed course. Who knows what devices and helps he may have left hidden for his faithful servants?

NYSSA: (sotto) Doctor, you said the truth would set us free. Should we tell him? The guards would never hear.

DOCTOR: (sotto) And risk changing history?

NYSSA: (sotto) What was it that he didn't want the guards to overhear?

DOCTOR: (sotto) Religion. Newton is an Aryan, an heretical sect. The followers of Arius, denounced at the

Council of Nicaea in 354. You know, I keep meaning to nip back there and have a look one day.

NEWTON: Time travel is impossible. If you kill me as a child, then I will not have captured you, therefore you will not travel back to kill me, and so I live, and so I capture you. A loop.

NYSSA: As the Doctor said, ridiculous.

DOCTOR: Exactly. If time travel were possible, then how do you explain

NEWTON: Why we are not overrun with visitors from the future? But what if there is no future? What if the Earth does not survive long enough for time travel to be discovered? Or at least is so disrupted that study is impossible.

DOCTOR: Then we cannot be time travellers.

NEWTON: Unless you are not from Earth but from somewhere else, some world where time travel is a reality. Quartering you would solve that mystery. If you are an alchemist, you will have studied any manner of forbidden teachings. You know the heretic Arius, Doctor?

DOCTOR: I know of him, yes.

NEWTON: He suggests that our Lord Jesus was created by God, not eternally begotten, but created. He suggests that God the Father and God the Son are not always contemporary.

DOCTOR: Yet you surely believe them to be one being.

NEWTON: But what if they did not always exist at the same time? What if that held true for people, people like you, people who travel through Time.

DOCTOR: (sotto) This is going from bad to worse.

NYSSA: All this from a handful of coins?

DOCTOR: (sotto) I'm so glad you didn't pay by debit card.

NEWTON: Different incarnations and yet the same person. And thus could loops in Time be made more pliable. It would not always be the same aspect, the same you, who would do the travelling.

DOCTOR: Um, surely God would not allow it. What would stop me from travelling back and.. and.. I dunno, shooting the serpent before it tempted Eve, saving you all a lot of trouble.

NEWTON: The most beautiful system of the sun, planets and comets could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of eternal God.

NYSSA: Meaning?

NEWTON: God balances the celestial bodies, sets them in their orbits and holds them in place. He would not allow such chaos.

DOCTOR: So we're agreed. Time travel is impossible.

NEWTON: And I should hang you.

DOCTOR: Ah, now.

NEWTON: Interesting. You would place yourself in hazard rather than allow my speculations to continue. This last coin. The triangle.

DOCTOR: Pretty, isn't it?

NEWTON: The pictograms are possibly oriental. I am no expert. I believe it comes from a time far more distant than the rest.

NYSSA: Because it's a triangle?

NEWTON: It is more radical in design. It suggests the powers of Europe have fallen to the heathen. Kingdoms rise, kingdoms fall. It is the way of things. But look here. It shows the solar system on the reverse.

DOCTOR: Ah, does it?

NEWTON: Fifteen planets. Far more than we are aware of.

DOCTOR: But you haven't seen that many, even with your telescope.

NEWTON: But we shall, once the opticians perfect better mirrors.

DOCTOR: But they don't have the tools to do it.

NEWTON: Not in my lifetime.

DOCTOR: (sotto) Nyssa, listen carefully. If anything happens, I want you to get into the Tardis.

NYSSA: (sotto) I wish you'd stop saying that. I'm not letting you out of my sight.

DOCTOR: (sotto) Get into the Tardis and close the door.

NEWTON: Unless hundreds of years hence a cataclysmic war engulfs Europe. In the middle of the war the Irish traitors rebel. We cannot fight on yet another front so make terms for peace.

NYSSA: (sotto) Is he right?

DOCTOR: (sotto) Not far off.

NEWTON: America rebels at some stage. They become so powerful that they colonise the Moon itself. Such advancement, such progress, and yet something goes wrong. Some catastrophe that prevents them unlocking the secrets of Time, but what?

NYSSA: He's barely aware of us. You can almost hear his thoughts.

DOCTOR: It's a unique gift, He can give himself totally over to an idea, abandoning everyone around him to his thoughts.

NYSSA: You're right. He is like you.

NEWTON: A natural disaster or an invasion. Some time after the reign of Elizabeth the Second, Earth is attacked. We ourselves are colonised as easily as we conquered India. Let us say a century afterwards, by

people from another world, by aliens.

DOCTOR: Ah.

NEWTON: That is not enough for you, is it, Doctor. You have come here to gloat, to view the moments of our history like a series of trophies! Guards!

DOCTOR: Please, if you will just listen to me.

JAILER: Dear, oh dear, oh dear. Not your day, is it. In you go again.

DOCTOR: Will you please stop pushing us?

MOLLY: Hello, love.

JAILER: Molly! What're you doing up in the cells?

MOLLY: I'm looking for the bowl that your supper was in. Where've you left it?

NYSSA: I thought it was our supper.

MOLLY: Sir Isaac been playing up again, has he? God, the man's a menace.

NYSSA: Understatement.

MOLLY: Poor dear. You look like you're a long way from home.

NYSSA: Do I?

MOLLY: My old Dad was a sailor, out on the high seas for King and Country. He had that look about him.

NYSSA: What look?

MOLLY: Like someone who'd seen new worlds but couldn't work out if it was all a dream. Or if this was.

NYSSA: More like a nightmare at the moment.

MOLLY: Your friend, what's he do for a living?

NYSSA: He's a doctor.

MOLLY: Oh, fancy. That other fella was a doctor too. The one we had here last week.

JAILER: Come on, Mistress Richards. Let's leave them to it. No questions asked, no getting our insides wrapped round a cartwheel.

MOLLY: Touch wood.

(Door closes.)

JAILER [OC]: Nighty-night.

NYSSA: We were nearly back in the Tardis again. He may be mad, but he's a scientist. We should be able to reason with him.

DOCTOR: Touch wood. Touch wood. His wife is superstitious.

NYSSA: Most people are in pre-technological societies.

DOCTOR: And that's how we're getting out of here. Science is getting us nowhere, so it's time to fall back on magic. That bedframe over there, help me find what's left of Sir Isaac's shot.

NYSSA: Er, here. It's embedded.

DOCTOR: Marvellous. Shouldn't be too hard to pry it loose. Give me your earring. Now, if I squash it beneath the bedpost, there. A crude coin. Now give me the lead shot. And again. Splendid. Did I ever mention Harry Houdini? Second best greatest escape artist ever.

NYSSA: The greatest being?

DOCTOR: Modesty forbids.

NYSSA: Well, it's not you, or we wouldn't still be here.

DOCTOR: Houdini taught me magic. Watch this. A variation on the French drop. See the piece of lead?

NYSSA: A trick?

DOCTOR: A good one. Watch carefully.

NYSSA: The lead turned into gold.

DOCTOR: Well, no.

NYSSA: No, of course it didn't, but it looked as if it did. Very good, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Thank you. Jailer! Jailer!

(Door opens.)

JAILER: Honestly, there's no chance of me ever eating again with you around. What is it this time, before I break your fingers in the door.

DOCTOR: I cross the void beyond the mind to seek a truth they'll never find.

JAILER: Don't follow ya.

NYSSA: A bit less arch, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Know me. I am the Doctor.

JAILER: And?

DOCTOR: For goodness' sake. Piece of lead from the pistol shot. Now.

NYSSA: Ta-dah!

DOCTOR: It turns into gold. Now, let us go and I shall give you riches beyond measure.

JAILER: Could I see that again?

DOCTOR: Pardon?

JAILER: Old eyes aren't the best. I like the part about riches beyond measure, but it's steady work, this, and I've got a large family to feed.

DOCTOR: I just turned lead into gold before your eyes. How can you have missed it?

GUARD: Sir Isaac wants them out in the courtyard again.

JAILER: Again? He's getting himself into a rare old state tonight. He'll be frothing before long. Come on, let's go.

DOCTOR: This is getting ridiculous.

JAILER: Prisoners again, Sir Isaac.

NEWTON: You have been alone with them. They will have tried to distract you. What did they tempt you with?

JAILER: Here, Sir Isaac. It was all a bit of a blur, quite frankly, but he says he can turn lead into gold.

NEWTON: Did he? And where did he get the lead?

JAILER: Your shot, sir. Turned it into gold, he did.

NEWTON: Did I also shoot the girl's earring off in the process?

JAILER: She had an earring?

NEWTON: Fool! It's a conjurer's trick. This man's no alchemist. He would know the truth of transmutation if he were.

NYSSA: It can't be done.

NEWTON: What can't?

NYSSA: Base metals to gold. It's impossible. But there is a state on the quantum level whereby the only explanation for the nature of matter is that certain elements do become something else. Not gold, but elements you have yet to even notice.

NEWTON: Guards, leave us! This is not for your ears. You will withdraw to fifty paces.

NYSSA: I was born on another world. I met the Doctor when my home was destroyed. He is an outcast from a race who walk through Time as easily as you sail the seas. Wars will see cities reduced to dust, people walk on the Moon, Earth falls to hideous monsters. But with the Doctor's help, humans rally back and drive the aggressors away, not once but many times.

NEWTON: (moans) And this is.. there, but not... I

DOCTOR: Sir Isaac, I have nothing but the highest respect for your genius. The greatest telescopes in the future are named after you. Not the toys you have now, but enormous machines housed in cathedrals to science.

JAILER: (distant) Sir! He's having one of his funny turns again. Don't interfere or he'll have us all in the gibbets.

NEWTON: Get out, simpletons! Continue.

DOCTOR: Continents on other worlds are named for you. Units of measurement named after you. Every child in every school is taught about how you saw apples fall and first thought of gravity.

NEWTON: They did not fall! They struck me full in the face, hard! My nose bled for three days.

DOCTOR: Yes, well, I'm a fast bowler.

NEWTON: And what do they neglect to teach of me?

DOCTOR: You will be remembered for as long as England stands.

NEWTON: That will be the 22<sup>nd</sup> century then, until the invasion.

DOCTOR: Yes.

NEWTON: Four hundred and fifty years, that's how long I will be remembered.

DOCTOR: It's the best I could do.

NEWTON: You're telling the truth. That was not the answer the Deceiver would give. It bears the hallmark of truth, the test of the true alchemist. Oh, the colours. The colours cracking, the sky cracking, my head!

NYSSA: Are you all right? Doctor, he looks like he's having a seizure of some sort.

DOCTOR: Yes, he's having a fit. Hold him.

NEWTON: I have lived with misunderstanding, and I have grown used to the burden. My only friend is the truth. The Lord moves in mysterious ways, his creation kept on course by people who know Him, not... Oh, my head!

NYSSA: Now! Doctor, the Tardis. Run!

DOCTOR: He's swallowed his tongue. He'll choke to death. There. This is perhaps the greatest mind will ever see. I will not allow him to come to harm, Nyssa.

NYSSA: Doctor, this is our chance to escape.

DOCTOR: Go to the Tardis and wait for me. Go!

NYSSA: All right, but don't be long.

NEWTON: Oh, my head! The colours! The lights! Like angels now. Like angels, cracks in the sky.

DOCTOR: Shh, it's all right.

NEWTON: What are you?

DOCTOR: A Doctor, nothing more.

NEWTON: My eyes hurt so much.

DOCTOR: It will pass. You'll soon feel better, trust me.

JAILER: Sir Isaac, shall I call for help, sir?

NEWTON: And what, bleed me? Smother me in leeches? We're all food for the worms in the end. Doctor?  
DOCTOR: Yes.  
NEWTON: We will not meet again.  
DOCTOR: No.  
NEWTON: Good. He is free to go. No harm comes to him.  
JAILER: Not sure I'm with you, sir.  
NEWTON: Take off your shoes, simpleton. You stand on holy ground.  
DOCTOR: Shush now. Everything will be all right. Just sleep.

NYSSA: Where is he? Oh, come on.

(Tardis door opens.)

DOCTOR: Hello, Nyssa. Sorry I was so long.

NYSSA: Is he going to be all right?

DOCTOR: He'll have a headache for days. (Tardis door closes) When he wakes, he'll already be bored with our memory and he'll move on to something new.

NYSSA: I still can't think why you admire him so much.

DOCTOR: Hard work, isn't he? But then we all of us have hidden talents.

NYSSA: Talking of which, that was a very good piece of conjuring.

DOCTOR: Well, you've been a wonderful audience. And now for my next trick.

(The Tardis dematerialises.)

### [Autumn]

DOCTOR: Something is added to cricket by the angle of the sun as it stands at four o'clock in early September. The shadows are longer. There's a suggestion of colder days approaching, of circular time, of aspects of our lives dying away and returning. The other sort of time is called linear time, modern time. Life is hard and then one dies, if that's something one is liable to do. Cricket seems to me to stand for the former and against the latter. It's something that dies but returns and writes mortals into history, in stories and statistics. Perhaps that's why it appeals to me. I also die and return, like a hardy perennial. However, linear time is currently impinging on mortals of the Hampshire town of Stockbridge in the form of an end-of-season struggle to avoid relegation from the top-most local league of village cricket. They're raging against the dying of the light. They need wins not draws. They need umpires to take the brightest possible view of those stormy skies overhead. They need to play in horizontal rain if they have to. I've seen them do just that in the last couple of weeks, and I've joined them so late this year that I may not be much help.

NYSSA: Doctor? Oh, there you are. I've seen you in those strange leggings so often, but they're still funny.

DOCTOR: They are pads, not leggings, and they are not funny.

NYSSA: Sorry.

DOCTOR: No, I'm mortally offended. I may not offer you a biscuit. Oh, don't look like that. There you are.

How's your work going?

NYSSA: Badly. I don't know where to start. I mean, I have started, many times.

DOCTOR: It is a new venture for you, a novel. Don't get downhearted at a few false starts. Mind you, I'm not sure that our guest house sitting room is an inspirational place to embark on a literary adventure.

NYSSA: Well, it's quiet enough. Unless you think it would be better if we went somewhere else?

DOCTOR: No. No, no, no. I was hoping to stay until the end of the season.

NYSSA: Then we should. I just wish I knew what I was writing about. But I want to keep trying. Every time I think about giving up, I feel sad.

DOCTOR: Then there's obviously a story there trying to get out, as I once said to P G Wodehouse.

NYSSA: I know, I was there.

DOCTOR: Oops. If we're going to get out of this one, I'm going to have to show some serious aggression. Wish me luck.

ANDREW:: So, what's it about?

NYSSA: I'm sorry?

ANDREW:: We've never had a writer here before. Don't tell the boss, she'll want to put your photo on the wall. Oh, have I interrupted the creative process?

NYSSA: Yes, you have rather.

ANDREW:: Excuse me.

NYSSA: No, wait. Er

ANDREW: Andrew.

NYSSA: I'm sorry, Andrew. That was rude of me. I'm working on a novel.

ANDREW: I guessed that. What sort of story?

NYSSA: At the moment it's about a world where everyone is very kind to each other. It's ruled by a good king.



ANDREW: Sounds dull. How about a serpent in the garden?

NYSSA: Oh, well, I suppose there should be.

ANDREW: It won't be very life-like if there isn't. Have you been working on that for all this time? I mean, you've been here, what, three weeks?

NYSSA: And two days.

ANDREW: And that's all you've got? Three sides?

NYSSA: I keep rewriting. That's what all the text books about this process say, that one has to continuously rewrite.

ANDREW: Nah, rubbish. You want to get it down on the page, then you can rewrite. Lord of the Rings sort of thing, is it? With the good king. You know, fantasy?

NYSSA: It is not fantasy.

ANDREW: A world where everyone's kind to each other? Sounds like it to me.

NYSSA: I'd like to get back to it now.

(Cheers and applause.)

JACK: 286 off 60 balls. We should get a County scout down here.

DON: Oh no, spare him that, Jack.

DOCTOR: No, really, thanks all the same. I do have to leave at the end of the season.

JACK: Oh, I thought you were from round here, what with all the photos of your folks in the clubhouse. Your lot go way back.

DOCTOR: My family's always loved this part of the world.

DON: But you spend the winters away. I get it. When I moved down here this year and took over the captaincy.

JACK: Don's an ex-pro.

DON: I was told there was this wonder player who'll just turn up one Sunday and ask could he have a knock? Always let him in, this lot said. Who'd have thought they'd turn out to be right about summat.

DOCTOR: I'm aware of your record, Don. Six matches for Lancashire and quite a long run in

DON: Good thing you did turn up. I've been trying to force this lot of useless lumps into the shape of a team, but the batting's agricultural, the bowling's what you spread on fields. I'm holding them up on me own.

JACK: He's right, he is.

DOCTOR: I don't think we're in as bad a state as all that. Even if we go down, there are some promising youngsters in the junior side. They'll take us back up again.

DON: We are not going down.

DOCTOR: That's the spirit. Never say die.

DON: The whole country's gone cricket mad with winning the Ashes, even if Bell's not worth his place and Pietersen can't catch a ball to save his life. If I had five minutes with him in t'nets.

JACK: Oh, here we go.

ANDREW: You've got more pages today.

NYSSA: Describing the world.

ANDREW: Still no villain?

NYSSA: I don't see why.

ANDREW: If you want drama, you need conflict.

NYSSA: I'm not sure I want conflict, thank you.

ANDREW: If you're trying to entertain people...

NYSSA: That's not why I'm writing.

ANDREW: So it's not for publication?

NYSSA: I don't see how it could be. It's quite possible that nobody will ever see it.

ANDREW: What's the point of that?

NYSSA: I'd really like just to get on with it now, please.

ANDREW: It all sounds a bit pointless to me, sitting here concentrating all day, not getting out in the sun while it's still here, and then you're not even going to show it to anyone.

NYSSA: Excuse me. I'm going back to my room.

ANDREW: You could show it to me, if you want.

NYSSA: You wouldn't... you wouldn't understand it.

ANDREW: Oh, too intellectual for me, is it? I'm a grad student. I'm only a waiter until the right engineering job comes along.

NYSSA: It's very personal.

ANDREW: A very personal fantasy novel.

NYSSA: It's not a fantasy. And why should I show it to you now? You're just going to laugh at it.

ANDREW: Where are you from?

NYSSA: Sorry?

ANDREW: The way you say laugh. I thought you were a posh girl, but that's not British posh, is it?

NYSSA: Since you ask, I'm from Traken.

ANDREW: Oh, right. My sister had a boyfriend from round there.

NYSSA: I doubt it.

ANDREW: Are you being rude about my sister?

NYSSA: Well, I thought why not? Because you're rude about everything you think you know about me.

ANDREW: But you're smiling, and I don't know if I've got the joke.

NYSSA: That's why I'm smiling.

ANDREW: There's a cricket club ball in a couple of weeks. A bunch of us are going. You want to come along?

NYSSA: Er, well, I'm very busy.

ANDREW: Go on. By then I'll have read it.

DOCTOR: It's a charity event, Nyssa. A fund-raiser for the club on the night of the last game of the season. Grand buffet dinner at the Stag's Head Hotel. Awards given out for the best performances of the season, then dancing until late to Good Times, who include two of the first team on bass and lead vocals. Why do you ask?

NYSSA: Are you intending to go?

DOCTOR: I'm usually away after the match. It makes it harder for them to give me awards.

NYSSA: Good. That settles that.

DOCTOR: Did you want to go?

NYSSA: No.

DOCTOR: There are some very nice formal dresses from this era in the Tardis wardrobe, or so I understand. I'm entirely willing to cut a dash in a dinner jacket if you'd like to give one a try.

NYSSA: No. If you want to be gone by then, we should be.

DON: Try and get it up round me ears, Doctor. They're never going to develop a decent spin bowler on these wickets, so I'm trying to push them for pace.

DOCTOR: Jolly good move, Don, getting mid-week nets going again mid-season.

DON: Well, somebody's got to do summat. Three games left and we're going to have to win them all to be safe. (The Doctor bowls again) Oof! Nearly had me head off.

DOCTOR: Sorry.

DON: No, no, that's what we're going to need, bit of chin music.

DOCTOR: I hope I didn't embarrass you the other day, mentioning your professional career.

DON: Embarrass? Why would I be embarrassed about it? You saying I've got something to be ashamed of?

DOCTOR: I thought you were being modest. You played some fine innings.

DON: Fine. Not fine enough. I was on playing staff there for three years, and ten years at Warwickshire before that. Second team coach, batting coach. Never quite good enough for the first team, so I moved before it were too late. I kept my fitness levels up. I was told I was a late bloomer. They put me in the side. Then suddenly there's this South African lad with a French passport and I'm back to coaching.

DOCTOR: I recall a certain dogged rear-guard action to save a match. I thought that was very impressive.

DON: My moment in the sun.

DOCTOR: What do you do now?

DON: I thought after I retired that I'd find a coaching job somewhere. Moved down here to explore some possibilities. That didn't happen. So at the age of 38 I walk into a Job Centre, got meself a place at the betting shop in town. All the youngsters they've got on playing staff now have got qualifications, going part-time, jobs they can do in the winter. That wasn't the case when I began playing. Now shut up, keep it going. Keep them flying at me head. That's better.

DOCTOR: Out of the ground, I'd say.

(Knock on door.)

NYSSA: Doctor, wait a moment. I was in the shower.

ANDREW [OC]: It's me, Andrew.

NYSSA: Oh.

ANDREW [OC]: Are you decent? It's a lovely day, and I have the day off. I was wondering if you might like to go out into the country.

NYSSA: Please, I need to work.

ANDREW [OC]: To Traken.

NYSSA: What?

ANDREW [OC]: It's about forty minutes away. And there's a pub with a four star restaurant. You can show me around.

(Handbrake on.)

ANDREW: Here we are. Traken village. Twinned with somewhere in Germany I can't pronounce. Is it all

coming back?

(Car doors close.)

NYSSA: This isn't my Traken.

ANDREW: What? So why did you let me drive you all the way out here?

NYSSA: I wanted to see it.

ANDREW: You know, a normal person would have told me that on the way, would have said 'no, it's the Traken in Ireland.'

NYSSA: I can't be a normal person then. I was thinking that perhaps there would be something... I don't know, special or frightening about this place, but it's really quite ordinary.

ANDREW: Frightening? You want to see frightening?

NYSSA: I got in that car with you.

ANDREW: Well, at least there's still the restaurant.

DON: There you are, Doctor. We're just talking tactics for tomorrow.

JACK: What're you having?

DOCTOR: Lemonade, please Jack.

JACK: Course you do. Anton, oi, comprenez? Another two pints. Pints, got it? I don't know where he gets these from. Some pikey brings them over, pays them in bottle caps. Beads, Anton. You like beads? Doesn't even speak English.

DOCTOR: Excuse me, I didn't want a pint.

ANTON: I'm sorry, this gentleman indicated...

DOCTOR: I wouldn't pay much attention to him.

JACK: Oi, oi, oi, what's he saying? He knows the lingo.

ANTON: As a rule I try not to. He thinks I don't understand him.

DOCTOR: Lemonade, please.

ANTON: Of course.

JACK: I didn't know you spoke Euro-muck, Doctor. Where's he from, then?

DOCTOR: Estonia.

JACK: Cor, look at him. He's a Doctor of everything. Doctor, this lemonade business, it's not a good idea. Team building, you see. Team spirit. You're either one of us or you're not.

DOCTOR: There's a truism if ever I heard one.

JACK: You what?

DOCTOR: This tactics meeting has been going on since what, tea time? I'm interested to hear what you've come up with.

ANDREW: Oh, it's got cold. Here, take my coat.

NYSSA: It's not necessary. I've had too much wine to be cold.

ANDREW: And here I was on the lemonade all night. At least you get talkative when you're drunk.

NYSSA: I'm not drunk. And you mean I asked you lots of questions. I like the sound of the foster care home.

ANDREW: Oh, I go back and help out. If you fancy another day out, it... no, bit too soon for that, eh

NYSSA: What do you mean?

ANDREW: You haven't said anything about yourself.

NYSSA: Do you really want to see my home?

ANDREW: Yeah.

NYSSA: You see just above that chimney pot?

ANDREW: You mean Orion?

NYSSA: If you take a line from the star in the belt that closest to the Orion nebula and run it upwards towards his left shoulder, about halfway, around there, you can still see it with a small telescope. The light of its destruction is still making its way here. There are all sorts of places I can still see it from, so I can still say that's where everyone I grew up with lives, except one person, and he's also lost to me.

ANDREW: What are you talking about?

NYSSA: That's my home, up there.

ANDREW: You're telling me that you're not a fairy princess out of a school play, and you're not someone out of Shakespeare, but you're really an alien.

NYSSA: I think I preferred the first two descriptions. Your voice sounded nicer.

ANDREW: Do you actually believe that?

NYSSA: I am who I am. Do you believe me?

ANDREW: Does it matter?

NYSSA: Yes.

ANDREW: Well, I do, then.

NYSSA: You're just saying that.

ANDREW: Yeah.

NYSSA: Because for some reason you've become interested in me. Interested in a rather awful way.

ANDREW: Well, you've seen right through me. Awful, is it?

NYSSA: I'm leaving soon.

ANDREW: Back to your home planet. Oh, do you hear how stupid that sounds?

NYSSA: No. I told you, it doesn't exist any more. But we will be moving on, and so there's really no point.

ANDREW: Let's assume you really mean

NYSSA: This isn't an excuse.

ANDREW: Oh, it's ridiculous, to be standing here, to be debating about human feelings. It's as ridiculous as you being from space. Feelings are feelings. You either have them or you don't. You can't hedge them off with logic. Oh, let's just see, shall we?

NYSSA: What do you... No, wait.

(Kissing.)

ANDREW: Tell me to stop. I will, immediately, straight away.

(Kissing.)

NYSSA: That was the first time I've ever done that.

ANDREW: Oh, I'm...

NYSSA: Don't say you're sorry, because you don't mean it.

ANDREW: I really don't.

NYSSA: I've thought about this moment. I thought it would be an obvious development, a step in a series of steps. I almost thought I could plan it. But now it's come and gone, by surprise.

ANDREW: I shouldn't have been so rough.

NYSSA: And you've just become completely vulnerable. I like that bit.

ANDREW: *That's* the bit you like?

NYSSA: I don't know, really. This is a new skill for me, letting surprises in.

ANDREW: And kissing. Not that you're not good at it.

NYSSA: I believe I require practice. You should continue, if you want.

(Applause.)

DON: We did it! We did it! You and me, Doctor, we all got out there, two matches to go. You see if we go down. In your face, Chislehampton!

DOCTOR: Excuse me, Don, my friend's over there. Nyssa, I've barely seen you in the last few days. How's the work going?

NYSSA: I've been inspired, breathed into. That's funny.

DOCTOR: Sorry?

NYSSA: Sorry. I mean I've written and written. It's now this enormous pile of paper. But I still don't have a villain.

DOCTOR: Who says you need a villain?

NYSSA: Nobody. Nobody says that.

DOCTOR: There's no need to bite my head off.

NYSSA: You're avoiding saying, aren't you.

DOCTOR: Saying what? Can I start this conversation again?

NYSSA: Saying what you think.

DOCTOR: About what?

NYSSA: The hair, the dress.

DOCTOR: Oh. Yes, well, you look very like someone from this era. You seem to be fitting in splendidly.

NYSSA: I suppose. I hadn't thought about it like that.

DOCTOR: I take it that wasn't the right answer.

NYSSA: Are you still enjoying yourself here?

DOCTOR: I am starting to find it a little cold. The nights are drawing in.

NYSSA: But it is lovely here, isn't it. It would be interesting to see the winter. Snow on the trees.

DOCTOR: At lunch they asked me about the club ball. I believe they're trying to engrave my name on that trophy. I said we'd already be on our way.

NYSSA: Oh.

DOCTOR: Oh?

NYSSA: I was hoping to go to the ball.

DOCTOR: Then you must. Obviously. You shall go to the ball.

DON: Doctor, come and have a pint.

DOCTOR: Shall I introduce you to the lads? A fine bunch. I'm sure there's an excellent night of conversation ahead. Concerning soccer and cars.

NYSSA: No. I have er... plans.

DOCTOR: Of course. You should get back to your... plans.

(The lads are getting drunk.)

JACK: So these two Arabs walk into a pub, right.

DOCTOR: Is that the time? I really must be going.

JACK: Have we offended you, Doctor? I don't want to swear in front of our star, now do, lads? With his effortless scoring, his mannered strokes. Not a surprise that he's so politically correct.

DOCTOR: All I want to do is play cricket. That's never been a problem before.

JACK: Yeah, you want to keep on thinking that you're better than us, too, don't you? You want to keep on doing that too.

DOCTOR: Perhaps it's something about this year.

JACK: You've got to be part of the struggle, Doctor. You have to put your life into the club, to do or die.

DOCTOR: I have. I do. This is not life and death for me. This is my recreation. I play to the best of my abilities, what would be the point of doing otherwise, but at the end of the day it's only a game.

(Cries of disbelief.)

JACK: Only a game? You don't get it, do you. You can tell you're not from round here.

DOCTOR: Last year's committee didn't think like this.

JACK: This is why they got rolled over. Half of them have left. That's why we're in this mess. This is why we can't hold our heads up in the villages. We're useless.

DOCTOR: You know, usually what I don't like about the English character is your willingness to embrace glorious defeat, but in your case

JACK: You're not English, then? What are you? Estonian?

DOCTOR: Very much so, and getting more so all the time. I'll see you at nets.

JACK: Ooo, get you.

DOCTOR [OC]: I find myself walking away from the lights of the pavilion and into the darkness of the forest. I don't look back, but I'm intending to go back. I'm intending to work for them just for a little longer, because of old obligations, because they're still family and things may change, and they're not going to be around forever. I walk fast into the woods at the edge of the ground, not looking where I'm

NYSSA: Oh. Doctor.

ANDREW: We were just er...

NYSSA: Stargazing.

DOCTOR: That must have taken considerable skill, through the branches of the trees. There are still a lot of leaves up there and a lot down here, as well.

NYSSA: Doctor.

ANDREW: I'm Andrew Whittaker. I've seen you at breakfast.

DOCTOR: Oh yes?

ANDREW: You'd be the er... elder brother? Friend? Social worker?

DOCTOR: Nothing that you could so easily define, I'm afraid.

NYSSA: Doctor.

DOCTOR: I'll see you back at the guest house. (footsteps recede)

ANDREW: Well, that wasn't scary at all. Do you feel the same way about him?

NYSSA: It's not what you think.

ANDREW: He's not one of your people then?

NYSSA: No, he's... You believe me.

ANDREW: Yeah, I've started to. All that detail in your book. I know that you've lived it. But you still need a villain.

NYSSA: I can't write about the villain. Not yet. That would complete the story.

ANDREW: And you want the story to keep going.

NYSSA: I don't know.

ANDREW: You should go after him.

NYSSA: I really should. So why aren't I?

DOCTOR: Good morning. Lovely day, isn't it? Sunny, just the faintest hint of frost. I hope you're not going to apologise.

NYSSA: I wasn't.

DOCTOR: I was young once. I think it's splendid.

NYSSA: You were rather rough with him.

DOCTOR: Was I? You know how I miss these things sometimes. I don't often understand the needs and expectations of human beings.

NYSSA: That's not true. You're incredibly human.

DOCTOR: I don't know whether to be flattered or insulted.

NYSSA: Flattered.

DOCTOR: This boy, Andrew. His lifespan and yours are roughly the same.

NYSSA: Doctor.

DOCTOR: You could have a perfectly happy life together here. Look at you, wearing jeans even. You could work in the pub or the betting shop, or become a successful author of fantasy novels.

NYSSA: It's not fantasy. Doctor, is something else troubling you? Is your season going badly?  
DOCTOR: Today's match has been called off, so there's only one more game next week. The pressure is on. We... they have to win. And it's the club ball the same night, so that will be when everything is decided. I come here for a particular sort of time and I've ended up with exactly the opposite.  
NYSSA: Sorry?  
DOCTOR: I told you not to apologise.

ANDREW: I love to watch you writing. You bite your lip.  
NYSSA: Shh. I'm trying to concentrate. I'm into the last bit.  
ANDREW: You're moving fast.  
NYSSA: It seems I have a deadline.  
ANDREW: Oh. Do you?  
NYSSA: If I said to you that I'd decided to give up a lifetime of travelling through Time and space in order to settle, to stay here, what would you say?  
ANDREW: I'd say great.  
NYSSA: Think about the question.  
ANDREW: No. You think, I do. How would anybody ever end up together if anyone thought twice about whether or not it was a good idea?  
NYSSA: Wouldn't you find it a responsibility, me staying here for you?  
ANDREW: I would try very hard not to think of it like that.  
NYSSA: What makes you like you are?  
ANDREW: Er, I'm a guy? In my experience it's the girls who do all this thinking about emotions.  
NYSSA: What if you wake up one morning and look at me, and don't want to be there? When I've stopped being your fairy princess and started working in the pub.  
ANDREW: I may have mentioned I'm a man. Just waking up one morning and looking at you is the furthest I can think at the moment.  
NYSSA: Stop toying with me.  
ANDREW: I'm being plain and honest.  
NYSSA: Oh, why does this have to be so complicated? Just shut up and let me write.  
ANDREW: You're getting near the end, and it's been a long time since you let me read it. Is there a villain?  
NYSSA: There is. He brings Time to the immortals. He makes the kingdom come to an end. I hope you like him. You made me include him.  
ANDREW: I haven't made you do anything.  
NYSSA: Ask me not to go.  
ANDREW: No.

NYSSA: I thought I'd come to see you play today.  
DOCTOR: Thank you. It's an important game for the team.  
NYSSA: I think you might have left earlier if it wasn't for me.  
DOCTOR: Might I? Let's not talk about the road not taken, shall we? Are you looking forward to the ball this evening?  
NYSSA: I'm not sure.  
DOCTOR: I think that leaving immediately afterwards would be apt.  
NYSSA: And you keep setting me deadlines.  
DOCTOR: I'm doing something I learned to do a long time ago. At least in your case I'm giving you a choice.  
NYSSA: At least I know where I stand.  
DOCTOR: Exactly. Now, wish me luck.

(Game in progress, leather on willow followed by cheers and applause.)

JACK: Go on, there's two there if you want them.  
DOCTOR: He's not gonna make it. (sigh) At least he got himself out rather than Don.  
JACK: Go on, Doctor, you're all right, you are. You get out there and you show 'em who's boss.  
DOCTOR: I'll play to the best of my ability, Jack. I always do.

ANDREW: I've never been out here before. That pavilion's a bit run-down. Still, good to see the village out supporting the team. Sorry, I keep interrupting you.  
NYSSA: No, it's finished. That's it.  
ANDREW: Great. How'd you feel?  
NYSSA: Sad.  
ANDREW: Oh, you mean you immediately want to start the next one?  
NYSSA: No. I don't know what it is. It feels strange that after I'm dead this might still be around, like a little digest of me. Part of me that won't suffer because of Time.  
ANDREW: Strange girl.

DON: We need four an over for ten overs, Doctor. The light'll close in after that. If we draw, we go down.

DOCTOR: I know.

DON: You've got to try. You're not gonna go lose it for us because I was an idiot to you the other night, are you?

DOCTOR: No.

DON: You've got your targets in life, I'm sure. I'm going to be announcing my retirement tonight.

DOCTOR: Is that what you really want?

DON: Best possible way to go. Only way to go, on top. Well, as close as I'm going to get. Blaze of glory. You've got to help me get there.

DOCTOR: Yes, Don, I am. Oh yes. Er, middle and leg, please.

ANDREW: I'm getting into this. Three overs to go, twenty to score. Your friend's up for it, but I don't like the look of the fat one. He looks like he's going to pass out. You know, you should be looking at the game, not at me.

NYSSA: I've worked out what makes you like you are.

ANDREW: Oh? Good. I'm all ears. But I am watching sport, so I won't actually be paying any attention. So I'll never learn about myself.

NYSSA: Time makes you like you are. You don't like it. You don't like to think about consequences, about one thing leading to another.

ANDREW: In one ear and out the other.

NYSSA: When you're a bit older, I think that'll change. I think that it does for men. Though I don't think that anyone who's going to die ever really gets detached from consequences, not like the Doctor is.

ANDREW: I didn't like what I caught of that.

NYSSA: I think it's time we got ready for the ball.

ANDREW: What? There's hours to go yet. Don't you want to see if the Doctor wins?

NYSSA: He'll either win or lose. And I've got something to give you before I go.

ANDREW: Oh. Yes, I think it's time we got ready for the ball.

(Don cries out in pain.)

DOCTOR: Don! You all right?

DON: Sure. Nearly there. Just give me a sec. Nearly there. Five off this over. It's getting dark. If they offer us the light, Doctor, we're not taking it, right? We are not taking the light.

JACK: One to win. One to win. Come on, this light won't last another over.

DON: We run for anything, Doctor. Just get bat on ball for me.

DOCTOR: Will do. Are you all right to run?

DON: Shut up. Course I am.

(Bowler runs up, and)

JACK: Go on!

DON: Run!

JACK: He's there! He's... not getting up.

DOCTOR: Well done, Don. We did it. Don? Don! Someone call an ambulance!

(Ambulance dispatcher on radio in background.)

JACK: Oh no. Oh, Don. He must have known. Why did he keep on going?

DOCTOR: I think someone should change the score card. Bill, you go and do that. He got in, you see. His bat just made it over the line.

JACK: The game. I hadn't thought about it. Hey, we'll have stayed up. Only he's not here to see it.

DOCTOR: He doesn't have to be there for the ending. He wrote it.

ANDREW: (yawns) Nyssa? Nyssa?

ANDREW: I went downstairs but she was nowhere to be found. On the table where she'd always worked was her manuscript. Anton said something about the cricket club ball being cancelled. I wasn't listening. I'd opened the book and started to read.

NYSSA: Something is added to cricket by the angle of the sun as it stands at four o'clock in early September. The shadows are longer. There's a suggestion of colder days approaching, of aspects of our lives dying away and returning. Of circular time.

**[Winter]**

(Strong wind blowing.)

DOCTOR: You stay there. I'll get it.

ANIMA: Oh, can't it wait? We've just got the fire going. At least put your jumper on.  
DOCTOR: Don't fuss. Always talking about jumpers. I don't think I've ever seen you in the same one twice.  
ANIMA: Well, at least I have more than one colour. You'll catch your death.  
DOCTOR: If that door keeps slamming around out there, it'll wake Adric and Tegan.  
ANIMA: You're getting old, you know. You can't do everything like you used to.  
DOCTOR: Yes, I can. Or I will until I can't.  
ANIMA: Stay here with me. Oh, for goodness' sake  
DOCTOR: The barn door's open. It's almost completely white out there, snow as far as the eye can see.  
Blizzard's right on top of us.  
ANIMA: All right, if you're going out there, I'm coming too. Where you go, I go. They'll find us frozen together.

DOCTOR: For goodness' sake, it won't take a moment.  
ANIMA: I'm a stubborn old thing and you should have realised that long before now.  
DOCTOR: Heavy going. It's deep already.  
ANIMA: You're getting old, dear.  
DOCTOR: It almost feels like I'm carrying someone.

LASARTI: Nyssa? Nyssa, where are you?  
NYSSA: I'm in the nursery. Go back to sleep.  
LASARTI: There you are. What's wrong?  
NYSSA: Nothing, Lasarti. I was worried about Neeka.  
LASARTI: She's fine, dreaming whatever baby's dream about. If she knows you're staring down at here, she'll have nightmares. Oh, you had your dream again, didn't you.  
NYSSA: For the third night in a row.  
LASARTI: Do you want to tell me about it? I am a specialist.  
NYSSA: I told you, I'm never going to let you analyse me. I should have included that in the wedding vows. It's a dream about a few years ago, from before Terminus, before the Corporation Wars.  
LASARTI: Your time with the Doctor. I can't begin to imagine how bad that must have been for you, the things you went through.  
NYSSA: It wasn't all like that. It was fun as well. I was a child. It was the start of me growing up. I had to have those adventures. If I hadn't, well, I'd be dead. But apart from that, I'd be someone who followed science as a sort of art, as a hobby, not someone who wanted to change things.  
LASARTI: And your father was in the dream?  
NYSSA: I knew you were going to say that. Yes, he was, just for a moment. It was like he was trying to communicate, to get through. It was like he wanted to take up all the channels, be everything in the world at once. Well, you know, I mean, it wasn't him. It was...  
LASARTI: The virus, the parasite that took him over.  
NYSSA: The Master, yes.  
LASARTI: I don't want to scare you, but it seems  
NYSSA: I know. This could be a genuine attempt at communication. That occurred to me tonight, which is why I'm awake and pacing around, why I came in here to check on Neeka. But it wasn't just the Master in the dream. There were Tegan and Adric, and some others I didn't recognise, and... the Doctor. It was very much a dream about the Doctor.  
LASARTI: You're about to ask if you can use my new machine, aren't you?  
NYSSA: I need to experience the dream more clearly. I need to move around in it, stay conscious while it's happening.  
LASARTI: Get your coat. I can find Neeka a cot at the hospital. They'll be surprised to see me in the lab at this time of night.

DOCTOR: It seems to be taking us a long time to get not very far. How long have we been out here?  
ANIMA: A minute or so.  
DOCTOR: It seems like ages. What? Hey, I say, who are you? Did you see that?  
ANIMA: No. Is there someone in the compound? That can't be true. For goodness' sake, don't go after him.  
DOCTOR: There, do you see him? He's wearing some camouflage, white on white, a pale white like a chrysalis, but he's wearing something more colourful inside. I caught a glimpse of it just for a moment.  
ANIMA: Don't be so silly. It's snow-blindness, that's all. If there is anyone out there, good luck to them. Not close that door and... oh, do we have to go inside?  
DOCTOR: I just want to check it's all right.

DOCTOR: Are you all right? Bet you're cold out here.  
ANIMA: I don't want to look at it. Please, can't we go back to the house?  
DOCTOR: I'm tempted to stay out here with it rather than go back through that lot. No, no, I said I'm tempted. I'm not going to stay. There's a nice fire back in the house, so... No, don't be scared because I mentioned



fire.

ANIMA: It's scared of you? That's a laugh.

DOCTOR: I'm not scared of you at all, you know. I've got you here. You're not following me. I'm listening to my wife for once. I'm closing the door behind me and locking it this time, so you can't knock it open again and have me come all the way out here. A nice fire back home's something to look forward to. Come on, keep going.

ANIMA: Are you talking to me or are you talking to yourself again?

ANIMA: Oh, don't worry so much. People often see things in blizzards. You work so hard, and you're getting forgetful these days, so sometimes you see something that isn't there. The children can make jokes about it.

DOCTOR: Is this what I asked for? A wife who points out my mistakes?

ANIMA: I do have a mind of my own. Always seemed to like that.

DOCTOR: I want to be here. I want to stay here.

ANIMA: Well, that's nice, dear. Why, is something going to come and haul you away? That thing out there in the barn? I don't think that's going to happen unless you want it to.

DOCTOR: It was just... a stray thought, that's all.

ANIMA: You've been saying you'll have to oil your bat, to keep it from warping over winter, during which you will doubtless create a puddle of oil on the kitchen floor. Doing that usually banishes all stray thoughts, including me calling for you. Or there's still the feed to sort out. You could do that ready for tomorrow morning. There are some sacks that need mending.

DOCTOR: No. No, I'll leave that until tomorrow. And I'm not going near the bat any more. Too old to play now.

ANIMA: You won't be saying that come summer. Come on, time for bed.

(Heavy breathing, then the Doctor awakes suddenly.)

DOCTOR: A nightmare. It was a nightmare.

ANIMA: Go back to sleep.

NYSSA: Doctor?

DOCTOR: Who are you? What are you doing in my house? I warn you. Oh. I know you, don't I? You seem familiar.

NYSSA: Doctor, it's me, Nyssa. This is a dream I'm having.

DOCTOR: It most certainly is not. You're a dream *I'm* having. It was that Welsh rarebit I had before bedtime.

NYSSA: Doctor, I'm asleep. I'm using a device that my husband helped develop to consciously explore one's dreams.

DOCTOR: Husband? Splendid. Wait, why do I think that's splendid? You remind me of someone. Oh no. I know who you remind me of. My daughter. The daughter I... lost. One, two, three, four, five? What comes after five? How many children have I lost?

NYSSA: Oh goodness, what does all this say about my unconscious?

DOCTOR: Absolutely nothing, I should think. Look, dream or no dream, come down into the parlour.

NYSSA: Fascinating. It's a farm house. Though certain aspects of it look like, feel like, the Tardis. That hat stand over there, the dishes on the shelves all around the room. Even that bedroom was quite similar to mine.

DOCTOR: Tardis? What's that?

NYSSA: I wonder what all this means to me?

DOCTOR: You really are an odd apparition. You seem to think that I'm the one doing the appearing. Would you care for some tea? Oh, there's only enough milk for one. You should have it.

NYSSA: Do you have a message for me, about my father? Or about the Master?

DOCTOR: The Master? Do you follow him, then?

NYSSA: Absolutely not! Is this about guilt? Why do you think I would follow him?

DOCTOR: I mean follow his adventures, twice a week on the telly. Rather thin stuff for me, but the children seem to enjoy him. And there is a certain comedy in the way he always trips over himself.

NYSSA: On the telly? You mean some kind of broadcast? Interesting.

DOCTOR: Why does a dream want to ask me such odd questions?

NYSSA: I'm not the dream, you are.

DOCTOR: This is all getting rather philosophical. Would you perhaps care for some cheese? Then at least we could both dream on the same wavelength. Tell you what, why don't we agree to treat each other like we're real. Far less tiresome and much less like something out of Lewis Carroll.

NYSSA: Lewis Carroll? I don't know the reference.

DOCTOR: You don't? So how can this be a dream of yours, then, eh? Answer me that.

NYSSA: I thought we just agreed we were both real.

DOCTOR: Ah, yes. Sorry.

NYSSA: Apart from the way it reminds me of the Tardis, I've never been in a house like this.

DOCTOR: It's a working farm house. We have animals in shelters down the field. In summer they forage in the forest at the back. At the front, on the other side of the road, there's a cricket pitch. I play for one team against another. It's under snow now. In summer I spend most of my time there. And of course in the old barn out the back, we have a coffin.

NYSSA: I'm sorry?

DOCTOR: A coffin. The machine for exploring the forest. You know, go softly on. The way one's whole life flashes before one just before one... dies. No, that can't be right. I need to be carried in that coffin, but... but perhaps you could explain this. I keep feeling as if I'm carrying someone myself. Oh! (crash)

NYSSA: Doctor!

DOCTOR: Now, you mustn't be alarmed. It's just me having one of my turns. Getting old. My speech centre gets confused, but there's still a mind in here, you know. We mustn't wake her upstairs. She's quite sensitive to change. We mustn't let her be frightened. If she realises I'm frightened, she'll be frightened too.

NYSSA: Is that her getting up?

DOCTOR: No, that's just a ghost. Oh yes, this place is haunted. Isn't that interesting? You should see them at night when I'm sitting up working. They come and go. Harmless. I think they're probably just memories. Every now and then one of them tries to scare me, but I'm past scaring now.

NYSSA: You do look old.

DOCTOR: Well, thank you for that. I *am* old. It's very comfortable. They always used to say that I was old before my time. An old man in a young man's body. Now I am what I am, and I intend to stay that way. It's coming down the stairs. Well, Nyssa, are you ready to meet a ghost?

NYSSA: I'm really not sure.

LASARTI: There you are.

NYSSA: You scared me. I told you not to follow me.

DOCTOR: The dreamer knows a ghost. Interesting.

LASARTI: I see you're dreaming about the Doctor..

DOCTOR: Let's not start all that again. Do I know you?

NYSSA: Doctor, this is my husband, Lasarti. Lasarti is a dream research scientist.

DOCTOR: There's a coincidence. He looks to be a very nice young chap. I'm very pleased for you. Though considering I don't know you, I don't know why I should be.

LASARTI: Tough dream for you, eh, love? You meet your old friend and he doesn't know you.

DOCTOR: Old friend? She said that, too. There is something very odd going on here.

NYSSA: There is one thing we can do. I'm going to switch off the machine. If this is all just a dream of mine, that'll wake me up. Wait a moment. This requires a precise REM blink, and will take concentration.

DOCTOR: An old friend. Her face does ring a bell, as I once said to Robert Louis Stevenson. How would I have met him? That would depend on what year this is. Supposed to be.

NYSSA: There. And we're still here.

LASARTI: That's not possible. Let me just... No, you're right. The power's switched off and we're both still here.

NYSSA: So is this some kind of shared psychic experience?

LASARTI: If it is, why doesn't he know who's communicating with him?

NYSSA: He seems lost, distracted. Doctor, you have to listen to us.

DOCTOR: Rather a generic sort of farm house. Could be any year.

LASARTI: Maybe a sudden shock.

NYSSA: I really wouldn't.

(Breaking glass.)

DOCTOR: What did you do that for?

LASARTI: To wake you up.

DOCTOR: It's more likely you'll wake up Tegan.

NYSSA: Tegan is here?

DOCTOR: Yes, asleep in the bed upstairs.

NYSSA: Oh.

DOCTOR: With Adric.

NYSSA: Oh.

DOCTOR: They're my children. You might also wake my wife.

NYSSA: I don't know why, but I never could imagine you having a wife. What's her name?

DOCTOR: It's... wait a moment. This is ridiculous. Oh, there you are. It's Peri. Or is it Kamelion?

NYSSA: Kamelion?

DOCTOR: That's an important name, frightening name. These names mean nothing to me. Excuse me, must dash. I must make sure Peri's all right.

NYSSA: Doctor!

LASARTI: You know, love, as a scientist, this is very exciting, but also way, way out of my comfort zone. Exactly how are we going to wake up now?

NYSSA: Never mind that. Follow him.

LASARTI: Where's he gone?

NYSSA: We have to find the Doctor, make him start to work out what's going on. Make him think about the problem.

LASARTI: That'd take his entire dinner service.

NYSSA: Ah, Doctor, there you are.

DOCTOR: Shh. Adric and Tegan.

NYSSA: They're lovely.

LASARTI: That gold star looks a bit sharp.

NYSSA: Doctor, I'm a mother myself now. I wish you could see her. But that's not how Adric and Tegan were, not when you met them or when you left them. They were adults.

DOCTOR: Well, they still have a lot of growing to do. Not coming through strongly enough yet. Something's getting in the way of... of me being born. Or dying. I mean... What do I mean?

(Distant evil laughter.)

DOCTOR: What is that outside? It mustn't come in here.

NYSSA: Doctor, where are you going?

DOCTOR: I mustn't let it in.

DOCTOR: I can see you. Why are you standing way out there? Why won't you come any closer?

LASARTI: Doctor, these are life-threatening conditions. You have to come in.

NYSSA: What are you shouting at?

DOCTOR: Can you see him? There, right at the edge of the farm. It's hard to see him, he's all in white like a mummy, bound up.

LASARTI: I'm not sure.

NYSSA: No, Lasarti, there, against the trees. He's moving. He's walking away.

LASARTI: He's circling the place.

(Evil laughter echoes.)

LASARTI: That seemed to come right out of the sky. If conditions in this mind – if we are in a mind – if the actual conditions of where we are reflect in our experiences here, we're not going to be able to get help because this is the worse blizzard I've ever seen. We're completely cut off, we're facing an unknown enemy, and we have no weapons. Tell me that at least you've got a few bales of hay that we can hide behind.

NYSSA: I've seen him before.

DOCTOR: What?

NYSSA: Doctor, you know who that was, and you know I know. You know I was there. You know what I'm talking about, I can see it in your face.

DOCTOR: I don't want any trouble. I have a life here, a proper existence. I've stopped. I don't have to run from place to place now. This is the kind of time I always wanted. Isn't it?

NYSSA: Doctor, if you don't remember who we are, what's *your* name? You can see this is wrong, this is an illusion.

DOCTOR: Do you know how often I got to play cricket? Hardly at all. A few seasons. Not what you might call a career. Not long enough to build up a decent average, not one that meant something. My people are meant to be made in different ways for different things. Each time we change, we change into something more comfortable, something appropriate to the conditions. I, this me, me, I was made for an existence in linear time for births, marriages and deaths, for domestic bliss. I was made to be at rest, and I have been denied this.

NYSSA: That doesn't sound like you. When were you ever petulant? You can't remember your name, but somehow you know about your people. You obviously know who we are on some level, and you know what that thing circling your house is even though you claim not to.

DOCTOR: This is everything I ever wanted, here. A wife and children, a home, a life based in Time surrounded by seasons, cut off from... from bigger things.

NYSSA: Everything I ever wanted is something that only exists in children's stories.

LASARTI: Oh cheers.

NYSSA: You know what I mean.

(Evil laughter.)

NYSSA: And I know that voice too. This far from Traken I know that voice. This is a trap.

DOCTOR: Real life is a trap. What an extraordinary thought. You know, I'm not going to sort this out on my own. You're going to have to tell me.

NYSSA: When you regenerated, you called it a Watcher.

DOCTOR: A Watcher?

NYSSA: I was there when you became you. Adric was there, and Tegan. The real Adric and Tegan. Say it to yourself. Adric, Tegan and...

DOCTOR: Nyssa. You must be Nyssa. You're not one of my family.

NYSSA: Not in the way you mean, Doctor.

DOCTOR: We travelled together in the Tardis.

LASARTI: Now you're getting it.

DOCTOR: Don't speak so soon. We're not out of the caves yet. I just need a moment to think, to piece all this together.

NYSSA: While we're dying of hypothermia.

DOCTOR: That door again. There's something about that door. It keeps bursting open. It wants me to come out here.

NYSSA: You said something strange earlier, about having a coffin in the barn.

LASARTI: We shouldn't go near the barn, then.

DOCTOR: No, we must. Come on.

LASARTI: It is a coffin. Now that I did not expect.

NYSSA: Floating, jumping

DOCTOR: What did you expect in a barn?

LASARTI: Not that.

NYSSA: It's like something's trying to get out.

DOCTOR: Or it's beating like a heart. The heart of the storm. It reminds me of a joke about a man who's being followed by one of these.

LASARTI: He runs into a chemist and asks if they've anything to stop this coffin (coughin').

DOCTOR: Oh.

LASARTI: Sorry. I was a medical student.

NYSSA: Why would a chemist... oh, tell me later.

LASARTI: At least it's warmer in here.

DOCTOR: It's warmer in there, too. Nice and warm in the box. No, we must leave here. I must get back to my wife and children.

NYSSA: Doctor, don't. You wanted us to come in here. This is the answer, it must be.

LASARTI: Everything else here has a context.

NYSSA: Even your voices and ghosts.

LASARTI: This is something you can't rationalise.

DOCTOR: You're right.

NYSSA: I understand that you want to stay here, with a home and family. I found the same thing.

LASARTI: Good to hear that.

NYSSA: But this can't be real. This coffin is proof of that. This is all an illusion in your mind, and we're trapped in here too with you, and we need to know why.

DOCTOR: You have your existence in Time. You found somewhere to live. Not where I found you, but still, you're settled. Would you give up what you have now? Would you be a wanderer again?

NYSSA: No.

DOCTOR: But you want me to give this up.

NYSSA: Because it's not real.

DOCTOR: No. No, I suppose it isn't. For me, it seems real life is a trap. How dare anyone assume I'd fall for it. How dare they try and catch me with something so simple, so trite! Give me that coffin.

NYSSA: Doctor!

LASARTI: What if there's something inside?

DOCTOR: Nyssa, help me into this thing. Lasarti, go and get that lid.

NYSSA: It's a Zero cabinet, isn't it? It's a device to help regeneration.

DOCTOR: Ah. Oh, that's clearer. Yes, yes, it is. Or my own memory of one.

LASARTI: There. Shall I fix it over you?

DOCTOR: No, just prop it up. That should be enough for the full effect.

NYSSA: So, now can you tell us? Where are we?

DOCTOR: Nyssa, Lasarti, thank you for coming to visit me. Welcome to my mind. Sorry about the mess. Sorry about the delusions and distractions. You see, I'm regenerating. As we speak, my physical body has just fallen through the doors of the Tardis on the surface of Androzani Minor. I've given Peri the antidote to the poison.

NYSSA: She's your latest companion.

DOCTOR: You'd like her. Or possibly not. She'll be fine. Her colour's already improving. But as for me. As for me, the supply of blood to my brain has halted. The spectrox poison is breaking down my nervous system. Is this death?

NYSSA: Doctor.

DOCTOR: I've been holding it off for about an hour, long enough to save Peri. All you've seen and heard here has taken place in seconds, in my brain as it dies. I must say, I couldn't wish for better company.

LASARTI: The blizzard, the house.

DOCTOR: It feels different this time. I was trying to reach out across Time and space to get support from my friends, to add their energies to my own, but something, somebody, is trying to block the regeneration. The

house was a distraction created by that someone. An attempt to make me ignore the outside world. For a few seconds, in the hallucination one suffers from at the onset of regeneration, for a few seconds it might have worked. But I think he's underestimated me yet again. He underestimates how much I've got used to the life of a wanderer, how much that's home to me now, just because he hates being alone so much.

LASARTI: He?

NYSSA: The Master. That laugh.

DOCTOR: The blizzard is his interference, his attempt to cut me off from those who might be able to help me.

LASARTI: But you managed to find Nyssa.

DOCTOR: Because of your machine, I suspect, boosting the signal.

LASARTI: And you kept this little space here, this Zero cabinet. You managed to fight him off that much.

DOCTOR: Kept it in the shape of a coffin, yes. Do forgive my imagination.

NYSSA: But how do we get out of this? How can we help you change?

DOCTOR: You must do something for me. Help me up, quickly. Lasarti, take this torch. Cover it in tar, set it alight. Destroy my home. Destroy this trap.

LASARTI: But... are you sure?

DOCTOR: Homes and hearths are for you and Nyssa, for all of you. I'm a wanderer in Time and space. In the end, I walk by myself, and all places are the same to me. Now, off you go. Nyssa, I have another job for you. Come with me. Give me your strength. Help me walk.

NYSSA: Where are we going?

DOCTOR: Into the forest, to meet the Watcher.

LASARTI: If there's anyone here, get out now! I'm not going to set fire to a nursery with children in it, even if you are illusions. The place is on fire! I'm setting the place on fire!

ANIMA: Do it. You must keep going.

LASARTI: What? What are you?

ANIMA: What do I look like to you?

LASARTI: Er, a mass of silver, contorted.

ANIMA: I'm in pain. My name is Kamelion. You must keep going. Destroy this place.

LASARTI: What are you doing here?

ANIMA: I was part of the Master's plan. My mental link to the Doctor was the channel between them. I always was whatever he wanted me to be.

LASARTI: But now you're free?

ANIMA: You and Nyssa being here has given me the power to resist, other minds to take strength from. Whatever he may have told you, these moments of illusion were precious to him. He may fight the idea of living in Time, but he does live in it, it does claim a part of him. Every time he regenerates, he dies. Did you find the children?

LASARTI: No, thank goodness.

ANIMA: They were the mental connections he sought across Time and space, the links to his other companions, Adric and Tegan. I was forced to hide them from him by making them into the shape of children, and now they are free to contact him, to support him. Now I'm going to think of the moment of my death. I am going to sever the link. Goodbye. (wibble) Argh.

DOCTOR: Kamelion, I can hear you. So it was you. And he's gone. He sacrificed himself, again, to finally break the mental connection that allowed this trap to happen.

NYSSA: I can barely hold you up, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Not far now, Nyssa. They're getting through. My other companions, they're helping me. But it'll do no good if we can't find him, the next person I'm going to be. And what a person he'll be. All those colours inside the white. Where are you? Oh!

NYSSA: Doctor, if we don't find him...

DOCTOR: Then I shall die. Really, finally, die. And I'll take you and your husband with me as my brain structure collapses. And in the real world, Peri is sitting there in my Tardis, lost in the Vortex. I can't die, because then she'll be lost forever, and I can't allow that.

NYSSA: Doctor, the blizzard, it's fading.

DOCTOR: There's no interference anymore. Kamelion put an end to it. I can feel them all now, reaching out across Time and space. Turlough. Tegan, there you are, safe at home. She's wondering what I'm doing in her mind. She knows it's important though. She's willing to give anything immediately. Her life, anything.

Brave heart, Tegan. Good to have you here when I die.

NYSSA: You're needed, Doctor. You mustn't die.

DOCTOR: Oh yes, Turlough, my enemies would delight in my death. As if I have enemies. Well, I suppose I do. Nyssa, help me go on. I have to find him before it's too late. Oh, there you are.

NYSSA: That's him, isn't it? Like last time.

DOCTOR: Yes, that's him.

NYSSA: Do you know what you're going to be like, just from looking at him?

DOCTOR: I can guess. Each life creates the next. No wonder Time Lords and Buddhists get on so well.

There was a moment there when it actually looked like I was going to get off the wheel of life, wasn't there? When it looked like I might actually have found my nirvana. But you were here to put a stop to that, to be the grit in the wheel. Or should I say the grain?

NYSSA: I'm very proud to have been a part of your family, Doctor.

DOCTOR: The most vital part, at the end. So, what happens now?

LASARTI: During all that, she didn't wake up.

NYSSA: It takes a lot to disturb her.

LASARTI: Like her mother.

NYSSA: So now you can say you met the Doctor.

LASARTI: I can see why you talk about him the way you do. Sometimes like someone out of legend, and sometimes like he was your best friend.

NYSSA: He's from both sorts of Time. He pops up in human time, linear time, the time that gives us death and babies and old relatives and long-term illnesses, and yet there he is in mythological time, circular time.

The time where the seasons die and resurrect, and so do gods and heroes. Where people who are in stories live forever.

LASARTI: You know, I just woke up and there I was in a hospital bed, ducking from having burning timber fall on my head. You didn't tell me what happened out there in the snow. How did the story end for you?

NYSSA: He took my hands and he kissed my forehead, then he started to walk forward towards the white figure. He turned back once and looked around, and somehow he found where all of us were looking at him.

DOCTOR: Thank you, all of you. Goodbye.

NYSSA: He said, and then he started to run with determination, without a hint of reluctance, because he still had things to do. He had someone to save back in the real world. He had a whole other self that he had to be to do that. He ran right into the white figure of the Watcher and he fell, fell into the figure, spiralling down until he was lost in the distance. I suppose if I never meet him again and grow old myself, I'll have to say that was the last time I saw him, in a dream. But without evidence, I'll say to people that I know he's still alive, somewhere out there. I'll know he's still travelling. I'll know that he's still having adventures. I'll know he always will be.